

THE CATHOLIC SUFFRAGIST

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

VOL III, No. 5.

May 15th, 1917.

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.

WHAT HAS WOMAN DONE FOR THE CHURCH?

BY DOM GILBERT HIGGINS, C.R.L.

A full and adequate answer to the question which heads this paper would require not a couple of pages, but many volumes. My readers will therefore understand why this article can be nothing more than a catalogue of some women that have made history.

In the first place, let me reverently name "Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called the Christ" (Matt., I., 16). By consenting to become the Mother of the Word Incarnate our Blessed Lady gave the Church its Head, even Christ (Ephesians, V., 23). The life of the Virgin Immaculate, what an inspiration has it not been to millions of Christians, raising their hearts to things modest, holy, lovely, turning their hearts against things base, unfair, unbecoming! But who shall attempt to estimate the service rendered to the Church by the Holy Mother of God from the moment when she took the disciples of the Crucified to her riven heart down to the present hour?

The Divine Head of the Church Himself, what help and sympathy did He not find among women when He had not a place whereon to lay His head! During the journeyings which occupied the last three years of His life, women "followed Him and ministered to Him" (Mk. XV., 41). Over and above alms, they bestowed the wealth of their friendship. Braving insult and brutality, they recognized Him when He was denied and rejected of men. The last sight which met the glazing eyes of Jesus was a group of women, faithful to the last, "among whom was Mary Magdalen, and Mary the mother of

James the Less and of Joseph, and Salome."

The services rendered by these holy souls to the Church in the person of its Head have continued to be rendered to the members of the Church. Turn to the "Acts of the Apostles" and you will find frequent and ungrudging testimony borne to the help and assistance given by the first women converts to Catholicism. St. Luke mentions Dorcas (Acts IX., 36); Mary and Rhode (XII., 12, 13); Lydia (XVI., 14). But to learn in what high esteem the services of women were held by the primitive Church it is necessary to read the Epistles of St. Paul, that inspired model of letter-writers. The Apostle of the Gentiles never misses an opportunity of saying something complimentary and grateful about women. This, for instance, is how he speaks of one in Romans, Chap. xvi., "I commend to you Phoebe, our sister, who is in the ministry of the Church that is in Cenchre: that you receive her in the Lord as becometh saints; and that you assist her in whatever business she shall have need of you. For she also hath assisted many, and myself also." Prisca in the same chapter he calls his helper in Christ Jesus, saying that she had risked her life to save his. He sends salutations to "Mary who hath laboured much among you," also to Tryphena, Tryphosa and Persis, the dearly beloved, who hath much laboured in the Lord." The same apostle entreats a fellow-worker to help certain women that have laboured with him (St. Paul) in the Gospel (Philipp, iv., 3).

Passing from the Apostolic age to the acces-

sion of Constantine the Great we might pick out many instances of devoted allies found among women by the Church in her hour of persecution. Seven names are enshrined in the Canon of the Mass and are every day commemorated at the altar of God to the eternal glory of womanhood. Felicitas and Perpetua, Agatha and Lucy, Agnes, Cecilia, Anastasia are so many precious stones set in a ring, the gift of the Lamb to His Bride. The undaunted spirit of the white-robed army of martyred men and boys that has marched through blood, fire, and the waters of many tribulations to the gates of Heaven cannot be accounted for except by the presence, during those centuries of combat, of valiant women who nursed them at their breasts and nerved them by their own brave words and holy lives. The enthralling Acts of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste and those of the Martyrs of Lyons show what an incalculable power for good lies in the brain and the heart of a Christian woman.

I can only allude to the gift with which the Empress St. Helena enriched the Church when she found the Holy Cross. An empress less known, yet who for her piety and wisdom is honoured by Alban Butler (Sept. 10) with the title of "the miracle of the world," was St. Fulcheria. This Greek princess, daughter, sister and wife of emperors, was the invincible bulwark of the Orthodox Faith against Nestorianism, as her panegyric by St. Proclus, the letters of St. Leo the Great, and the commendations of the Œcumenical Council of Chalcedon abundantly testify.

Not the least of the services rendered by women to the Church is connected with the translation of the Bible by St. Jerome into Latin. The Vulgate upon which Latin Christians have fed these fifteen hundred years and which has been woven into the literature of Europe might never have been published if St. Jerome had not been stimulated to undertake and execute the arduous task by his friends, Melania, Marcella, Blesilla and Eustochium. These holy and learned women encouraged the translator not only by their exhortations, but chiefly by the interest they themselves took in Biblical studies. They have a right to share in his glory as the author of the Vulgate.

St. Jerome departed this life A.D. 420, ten years before the death of St. Augustine of

Hippo. No need is there to speak of what this illustrious bishop brought in the shape of intellectual wealth to the Catholic Church. Her children are nourished to this day upon his writings. And to whom after God does the Church owe this sublime teacher, and winning saint? His "Confessions" leave us in no doubt on this point. But for a St. Monica there would have been no St. Augustine, and think what the Christian world would have lost had it not come to know that heart of flame, second in its intensity of love and strength and human sympathy to the heart of St. Paul himself! Try also to imagine how much poorer the Church would be if Christian wives and mothers, tortured by the evil conduct of their men folk, could not turn to the picture of the much-tried, but ever patient, ever hopeful St. Monica.

While on the subject of wives and mothers who have moulded Christian society by their virtues, let me remind you of Blanche of Castille, mother of St. Louis of France; St. Margaret of Scotland; St. Elizabeth of Portugal, the Peace-Maker; Queen Osburh, mother of Alfred the Great, to mention only a few well-known names. Everyone conversant with the "Lives of the Saints" will remember what a mother did for St. Edmund of Canterbury, for St. Charles Borromeo and other distinguished prelates of the Church.

It is to a woman, the Princess Olga, that Russia is indebted for the first principles of the Catholic religion. A woman, Queen Isabella, freed Spain from the yoke of Mahometanism. She believed in Columbus and enabled him to reach America.

Rome can never forget what she owes to woman's unselfish devotion so long as the name of Hildebrand is on her records. For who espoused the cause of the great Pope when bishops deserted him? Matilda, Countess of Tuscany. Who sheltered him in his exile? The same undaunted woman, who dying bequeathed her vast patrimony to the Holy See.

Two women, St. Bridget of Sweden and St. Catherine of Siena, succeeded in closing the Great Schism and brought the Pope back to Rome. A reformation of the religious Orders of men and of women was effected by the piety, wisdom and tactfulness of a St. Teresa.

(Continued on page 43).

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

We hope members will make a special effort to find time this month and next to sell the paper, in order that the Rev. Prior Higgins' articles may be well circulated. It would be a good plan, too, for members to send a copy of the paper to the Superiors of the Convents where they were educated. Our member, Mrs. Tucker, sends us a letter from the Public Library, Leamington Spa, accepting her offer to present monthly the "Catholic Suffragist" to the Library there. If other members would follow Mrs. Tucker's excellent example we should reach a wide public.

* * *

At a mass meeting of Suffrage Societies, at the Central Hall, Westminster, the following resolution, moved by Mrs. Swanick, was carried unanimously:—

That this meeting cordially supports the Government in its decision to include the principle of Woman Suffrage in the Electoral Reform Bill, and at the same time calls upon the House of Commons to pass as wide a measure of woman suffrage as possible this Session.

Mrs. Despard was in the chair, the speakers being Mrs. Swanick, Mr. Dickinson, M.P., Miss Evelyn Sharp, Miss Eva Gore Booth and Miss Sleive McCowan. As Mr. Dickinson reminded the audience, "there's many a slip 'twixt cup and lip." What is wanted to prevent the slip is that the Government should make Woman Suffrage an integral part of the Bill.

* * *

Earlier in the week a meeting, convened by the Women's Freedom League, was held at the same hall, to protest against clauses III. and V. of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill. The meeting was supported by a number of women's societies, including the C.W.S.S. The speakers were Miss Abadam, Miss Esther Roper, Miss Maude Royden, Mr. Lansbury, and Commander Wedgwood. Mrs. Despard took the chair. The resolution was passed by the vast audience, with only four dissentients.

* * *

Countless women must have read with burning indignation the story of the wrongful arrest of two young women on Easter Monday, at Brentford, who, accused by a policeman of insulting behaviour, were ordered

by the magistrate to be medically examined, to see whether they were suffering from venereal disease. The doctor reported favourably, and the girls were dismissed without so much as an apology. In view of this disgraceful business, the Women's Freedom League, for whose boundless zeal we cannot be too grateful, hastily convened a meeting at Caxton Hall, on April 25th, and a resolution of horror and indignation was passed unanimously. The resolution was signed by representatives of a number of women's societies, including the C.W.S.S. It is hoped that the Home Secretary will receive a deputation, which will present the resolution.

(Continued from page 42).

What shall we say of Blessed Joan of Arc? Only this one word, that had the Maid of Orleans not broken the power of the English in France it would have fared ill with the Eldest Daughter of the Church when England drifted into Protestantism.

Space does not allow me even to enumerate the educational and charitable works which nuns and other religious women have started and carried on, sometimes under violent opposition, always at a great expense of money and health. Teaching Orders, like those of the Canonesses regular, Notre Dame de Namur, Notre Dame de Sion, the Bernardines, the Sisters of St. Maur, the Ursulines, &c., have left an ineffaceable imprint on the grateful memory of generations of Catholic women, while Sisters of Mercy, Sisters of Charity, Little Sisters of the Poor, the Sisters of Nazareth and others have by their devotion to the poor and suffering, to the aged and to the children, earned the unstinted praise of Christians and non-Christians alike.

One name more and I have done. The world-wide Society for the Propagation of the Faith, upon which hundreds of Foreign Missions have been, and are, dependent; to whom is it due? It sprang (1822) from a woman's burning heart, a woman's living faith. The originator of this magnificent organization for the spread of the Gospel among the heathen was Mdlle. Pauline Jaricot.

Having thus briefly sketched what woman has done for the Church, I hope to show next month what the Church has done for Woman.

THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.

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Hon. Editor MISS LEONORA de ALBERTI.
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Signed articles do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Society.

THE CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

Summoned by the Women's Freedom League, representatives of a number of Suffrage Societies (including the C.W.S.S.), and other societies of women, gathered recently in the great Central Hall, Westminster, to protest against clause 3 of the above bill, which would give power to a magistrate to make an order for a girl under eighteen, accused of various offences, to be detained in a home till she reaches the age of nineteen. And although by the time these remarks are printed we may hope the monstrous clause will have been deleted, or at least radically changed, I think it is worth while to give the point of view of those who protest against a clause which many well-meaning people ardently desire to see passed into law. If their desire is realised, every young girl in the kingdom who goes into the street without an escort, is by that fact alone placed under police supervision.

Any girl waiting for an omnibus, any high-spirited, rollicking factory girl returning from her work, any girl chaffing a soldier as she passes by, any girl taking a stroll would be at the mercy of a zealous or malignant policeman. Worse than that, she would be at the mercy of any immoral man who chose to threaten her, at the mercy of any panic-stricken magistrate, who chose to have her detained in a home. The wording of the clause alone is sufficient to condemn it in the eyes of any true lover of liberty. Any girl convicted "Of any offence under the Vagrancy Act of 1824, of wandering in the public streets

or public highways, and behaving in a riotous manner." Who is to judge of what constitutes riotous conduct, who is to judge whether a girl has solicited men? Well, the word of one policeman is good enough to convict any woman, and he need not have seen the offence committed. Every woman knows that men solicit as well as women, and every man knows it, except perhaps the mentally deficient, or intellectually dishonest, gentlemen who have been writing to the press of late, weeping over the innocent soldiers led into sin by harpies. But it is very rare that a woman gives a man in charge, because the man has merely to reverse the charge and accuse her of soliciting him, and there is not one policeman in a thousand who would take a woman's word, on a matter like this, against a man's. And having given her in charge the man can walk off; he need not appear in Court. But if the man is charged, well, that is a very different matter; of his offence proper evidence must be produced.

The vast audience at the Central Hall, though not agreed in details (there were some lively interludes), agreed that the clause was intolerable. Four persons only voted against the resolution of protest. Mr. Dickinson, who had asked to be allowed to put the case of the promoters of the clause, said that it had emanated from a body of women social workers, the Preventive and Rescue Sectional Committee of the National Union of Women Workers,—not from the Government. At the request of

OFFICE RENT FUND.

Subscriptions to this fund now amount to £21 13s. and I have to thank those who have so generously sent a donation. More than half the required sum has now been collected, but I would appeal to those who have not as yet subscribed to realise the urgent necessity of this fund which has to be raised every year to pay for the rent, etc., of our office, and to send a contribution without delay. Any gifts, no matter how small, will be helpful. It is only too true that many people would like to subscribe, but they put off doing so and leave it to others, and, unfortunately, others leave it to them, and thus, owing entirely to dilatoriness, nothing is done. If you think that this object is worthy of receiving help from anyone, show your appreciation by subscribing yourself at once.

B. GADSBY,
55, Berners Street,
Oxford Street, W.1.

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these women he, Mr. Dickinson, had framed a clause on the lines suggested. He admitted that the clause as it appeared was not his, he considered his own was better, but did not give the audience an opportunity of judging. He had listened to the speeches, and if the objections brought against it were sound the framer of the clause ought to be shot for incompetence.

It had been said that a girl could be convicted and sent to a home on the word of one policeman. He thought that any magistrate worthy of his station would institute an enquiry. The remark was greeted by an audience largely composed of men and women suffragists with derisive laughter. And indeed the Brentford case, which is alluded to in another column, and other cases, are abundant proof of what women may expect from magistrates, who without the vast power which this clause confers, have already ordered women to be medically examined, to see whether or no they are suffering from venereal disease. It is not surprising if women have lost confidence in the judgment and in the justice of men when dealing with moral questions. We may well resent this kind of legislation, we may well say, if this is the best you can do, withdraw your Criminal Law Amendment Bill, speed up your Electoral Reform Bill, giving women power to protect themselves.

L. DE ALBERTI.

CAROLINE CHISHOLM.

Our readers will be interested in the following letter, which we have received from Mrs. Chisholm's daughter:—
To the Editor of the CATHOLIC SUFFRAGIST.
Moosomin, Sask.,
Canada,
3rd April, 1917.

Dear Madam,

As a daughter of Caroline Chisholm, allow me to express my grateful appreciation of the article written by you in the CATHOLIC SUFFRAGIST. There is a strange revival of interest in my mother's work.

I have written to my sister, telling her of your tribute to our mother's memory.

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
MONICA GRUGGEN.

The Association for Moral and Social Hygiene asks us to state that the Association is strongly opposed to Clause 3 of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill.

COOKING ON ACTIVE SERVICE.

Red Cross Invalid Kitchens are a great feature of the hospital service of our Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, in which the number of medical cases exceeds that of the surgical, as a rule. These kitchens have been established for some time in Malta and Egypt, but I happened to be one of the first cooks chosen to go and start one in Salonica last summer.

The Director of Medical Service for the Salonica Force, being a wise and far-seeing man, realised the efficacy of good food in hospital treatment and wished a test kitchen to be started. He must have been satisfied with the experiment, for before I left Invalid Diet Kitchens were dotted all over the Base, attached to British and Canadian General hospitals. The Canadians euphemistically called us dieticians, but we were quite content to be known as cooks!

We arrived last June in Salonica, after a somewhat adventurous and protracted journey, via Malta and Egypt, and were swiftly motored some miles up the line towards Monastir, to one of the most important hospitals, neatly laid out on one of the Macedonian slopes. The wards, consisting of large double Indian marquees, lined with red and yellow, to minimise the sun's heat, were arranged in lines, so many surgical and so many medical, and these were grouped about the various administrative, store and recreation tents; also the church, post office and censor's tents, and the operating theatre, X-ray and laboratory tents. Above all floated the Union Jack and Red Cross flags, the latter as a warning, unhappily disregarded, to enemy aviators that sick and wounded men were being tended beneath it.

Further up the hill were the bell tents and marquees of the medical officers and the company, and some distance off the sisters' camp, where I was destined to sleep, feed and take my recreation for the next few months. We were conducted to a perfectly empty marquee with tarpaulin laid on the ground, which had first to be divided into cubicles by means of cord and sheets or curtains and then furnished by the contents of the mysterious-looking camp kitbags we had brought with us. When unlocked, each disclosed a collapsible bed (no mattress) and chair, a groundsheet, useful for

keeping the rain from our beds during storms, if the tent leaked, and a collapsible bath and washing basin of green canvas; also straps fitted with hooks for the tent poles. Tables and cupboards were made from old boxes, begged from the canteen, and the Army furnished sheets, blankets and the sweeping white mosquito net which must be religiously tucked in at night and mended at once if torn; these nets, together with quinine doses were considered preventive remedies for malaria. Against dysentery we had to drink chlorinated or boiled water; it was not safe even to wash our teeth with ordinary water. To prevent enteric fever, as well as being inoculated, we must drink only condensed milk and cover all food with muslin squares, weighted with beads, to keep off the ever-present and multitudinous fly.

To avoid cholera no salad must be touched and no fresh fruit, unless its origin was known and it had been carefully washed. The scourges of camp life were numerous and varied, our tents were infested with lizards, beetles, grasshoppers, sandflies and rats, and from time to time we were subject to the most terrific wind, known locally as the "Vardar Devil." Nothing was sacred from it, it would rise suddenly and sink as quickly, and would last from half an hour to three days and nights. Clothes, letters, furniture would be blown all about the camp, if we were not swift to lace up the openings; mosquito nets would descend and nearly smother the unwary sleeper, and now and then the tent would come about our heads, however well pitched by the Staff Sergeant and his retinue of dirty but picturesquely clad Greeks. When the wind brought dust and sand in its wake the cup was full, and I for one wished myself back in "Blighty," for, to my mind, a constant hurricane is more shattering to the nerves than any similar experience.

The cooking we did was not for the whole hospital, but for the very sick, and even so it was on a large scale. We rose at 6-30 and worked all day, except during the heat of the afternoon, when a siesta was imperative, for the thermometer registered 107° and more in the shade, and all we could do was to lie on our beds and pant. We cooked in a tent with

outside. Convalescent patients were sent as "fatigues" to help us.

The orders from the wards, in this hospital of over 1000 beds, were varied, but the chief things wanted were arrowroot, cornflour, Bengers, etc., which we had to make, 100 pints at a time, in baths. Albumen water meant the breaking of 400 eggs, a process which kept one person busy a couple of hours.

Lemonade involved the grating and squeezing of 300 lemons, and we set half a dozen pails of jelly on ice each day.

And this work went on week days and Sundays, when one had to scheme to snatch half an hour for Mass. Our reward was the gratitude of the nurses and patients, which was very inspiring.

The time fled all too quickly and by Christmas I was home again, after my experience of active service, an experience I would not be without on any account, for I suppose it has an educative effect quite unlike any other, not the least being contact with the magnificent men who are suffering and enduring for us in a semi-enemy country, where one of their greatest trials is the sense of exile and distance from home, which is an experience our soldiers in France are spared.

MARGUERITE FEDDEN.

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Holy Mass will be offered for the intentions of the Society at S. Patrick's, Soho, 10-30, Sunday, June 3rd.

HASTINGS AND EAST SUSSEX.—The charitable prayers of all C.W.S.S. members are asked for Mrs. Fryer-Smith, who died very suddenly on Good Friday. She will be a great loss to our branch, of which she has been, since its formation, one of our best members. R.I.P.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH.—Hon. Sec., Miss Cooper, M.A., Seafeld House, Great Crosby, Liverpool. A great number of members met together at Colquitt Street, on March 14th, for a Social and Suffrage Talk, and so successful was the evening

that it was agreed that another on similar lines should be held at the beginning of May. There was a varied programme, including Mrs. Krüger, Miss W. Dunn and Miss B. Short, as vocalists; Miss E. Taylor as elocutionist, Miss Spencer violinist, the Misses Law dancers, Miss J. Jolly pianist, Miss Dunn and Miss M. Short accompanists.

Father Walshe has kindly agreed to address a meeting of Liverpool teachers on Suffrage at an early date.

The Liverpool Society desires to place on record their deep appreciation of Miss Murray's services in connection with the paper-selling, and to wish her every success in her new work at Burnley.

REVIEW.

SOME MINOR POEMS OF THE MIDDLE AGES, M. G. Segar and E. Paxton. (Longmans, 2/- net). In this book Miss Segar follows up her "Mediæval Anthology" by giving us some samples of the works of the minor poets of the Middle Ages, but this time she gives the poems in Middle English. With the assistance of Miss Emmeline Paxton's glossary and grammatical notes any reader will find the book easy to understand. In her able introduction Miss Segar helps us back to the atmosphere of those early days when poets took their calling seriously and were teachers as well as singers. But they were no solemn kill-joys, with a religion like a sort of skeleton in the cupboard, to be allowed a day's outing on Sunday. Their religion was something to sing about and rejoice in, the world was a goodly place, and England was merrie England. They had learnt to rejoice in the Lord and to share their joy with their fellows. Perhaps the most beautiful poem in the book is the lullaby, "This enders night," of which the refrain runs:

"This enders nyght,
I sawe a sight,
A sterre as bryght
As any day;
And ever a-monge,
A maydyn songe:
Lulley, by, by, lully, lulley."

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On the 16th May.—Mr. Laurence Houseman: "Peaceful Slumbering."
Chair—Miss Underwood
On the 23rd May.—The Rev. W. Major Scott: "The Upward Thrust."
Chair, Mrs. Despard.

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C.W.S.S. Literature.

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Tuesday, May 22, 8 p.m. Annual General Meeting.
Wednesday, May 23, 8 p.m. "Woman's Opportunity." The Rev.
Hugh Chapman. Chairman: The Hon. Mrs. E. L. Franklin.
Wed. June 6, 8 p.m. "The 'Rights' of Majorities." Mr. Laurence
Houseman. Chairman: Mrs. Corbett-Ashby.
Wed., June 13, 8 p.m. "Women and Trade Unionism." Mr J. J.
Mallon (Secretary of Anti-Sweating League).
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