

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. XVI, No. 9.

15th OCTOBER, 1930.

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.

Nationality of Married Women.

BY C. M. GORDON, M.A.

Among matters to be discussed at the Imperial Conference are the steps that can usefully be taken to regularise the position of women married to men of other nationalities.

It was not until the French Revolution that it became customary for a woman to follow the nationality of her husband. This provision was incorporated by Napoleon in the French Civil Code, but it was not until 1870 that a British woman lost her nationality on marriage with a foreigner, and was placed in a position where she is liable to suffer serious hardship. On marriage she loses the protection of her own country without necessarily acquiring that of her husband's. In her own country she is required to register as an alien, she may cease to be employed in Government or municipal service and forfeits the elementary rights of citizenship. In time of war she may be treated as an enemy in her own country, have her possessions taken from her or be driven to a foreign land of whose very language she is ignorant.

The position of women married to aliens is very chaotic, as although in general a woman follows her husband's nationality, there are many exceptions to this rule. The South American Republics have never cared for it, and it does not hold in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, Equador, Finland, France, Norway, Russia, Sweden, Turkey, and other states in the Old and

New World. Many other countries, including Austria, Greece, Italy, China, Japan, Poland, Switzerland and Bulgaria only deprive a woman of her own nationality if by the laws of his state she acquires her husband's. Others, such as Australia, Canada, Czecho-Slovakia, Great Britain, the Irish Free State, South Africa and Spain, have no provision for safeguarding the nationality of their women nationals, and if such marry men whose countries do not give them nationality, they become stateless, citizens of nowhere, and with no right to protection from any country.

With such diversity of legislation and practice it is hardly to be hoped that rapid progress will be made internationally, but the Women's Societies in Great Britain, including our own Alliance, have put certain definite proposals before the Government. These were approved by the Prime Minister in April, 1929, and the demand that a British woman should not lose her nationality on marriage unless she makes a declaration of alienage, received the unanimous support of the House of Commons in 1925. Early this year the Home Secretary received a deputation representing 21 women societies, two of them composed entirely of Catholic women, who urged the Government to take all possible action to promote nationally, in the British Commonwealth of Nations, and internationally, legislation to secure to women, whether married or single, the right

to retain or change their nationality. They asked that such action should take the form of introducing and passing into law a Bill embodying the principles outlined above, of endeavouring to secure the adoption of similar legislation throughout the British Commonwealth and of declaring to the Codification of International Law Conference about to meet at the Hague that only along such lines should legislation be promoted. They further demanded that in the event of these proposals being unfavourably received at the Hague, our delegates should make clear that Great Britain could not support any formula of agreement which would conflict with such legislation in her own country. In March the Foreign Secretary stated that His Majesty's Government were in principle in favour of this policy. When the Codification Conference met in April the British Delegate stated categorically that his Government were of the strong opinion that a woman ought not on marriage to lose her nationality or to acquire a new nationality without her consent.

Part of Mr. Henderson's statement is of great importance at the moment as he drew attention to the fact that the position would be complicated were the Dominions opposed to the projected legislation. But British women cannot continue to suffer injustice until such time as all the Dominions agree to bring about reform. Their views have been made clear not only in this country but by the women's organisations overseas. There is little doubt that several of the Dominions are willing to legislate at once on the lines proposed, and it would be both unfair and unreasonable to ask them to submit to the veto of one or perhaps two of their number. At the last Imperial Conference in 1926 many members of the Committee, which considered this question, were in favour of a change in the law which would give British women the right to retain their nationality on marriage with an alien. It was further recognised that it might be necessary to depart from the rule of uniformity in law throughout the Empire, an entry in the minutes stating "That any departure from uniformity on this question demanded serious consideration." Uniformity of law throughout the Empire is indeed desirable, but of infinitely greater weight is justice, and if the two conflict it is the former which must be sacrificed. British

women look to their Government to give a strong lead to the Imperial Conference, and in particular to make clear that this country can no longer lag behind other nations. It used to be our proud boast that Britain was always to be found in the vanguard of reform, but already more than half the civilised world have laid down that marriage shall no longer automatically cause women to be classed with children and lunatics and that they be entitled to apply for and be admitted to nationality rights in their own persons. The reform is one which is long overdue, and the Government is in honour bound to stand by their principles and make clear that they will brook no further delay.

The Catholic Social Year Book, 1930.

[Catholics and the Public Medical Services. By Letitia Denny Fairfield, C.B.E., D.P.H., Barrister at Law. With a Preface by Rt. Rev. Monsignor T. A. Newsome. Catholic Social Guild. 1s. net.] As the title denotes, this book deals with the State's concern with the health of the people, and how Catholics should regard the public medical services. No one could be better qualified than Dr. Letitia Fairfield to deal with this subject. The chapters treat of mothers and babies; the unmarried mother; the pre-school child; the school child; the mentally afflicted; the blind and deaf, racial problems, etc. There is a danger, no doubt Dr. Fairfield is aware of it, in the State's supervision of "the citizen for his own good from the cradle to the grave." Some people would give the State still wider powers in connection with the nation's health, but it is improbable that the British people would tolerate medical tyranny, which might so easily become one of the worst forms of tyranny.

The Birth Control Movement in England.

[John Bale, Sons, and Danielson Ltd., 6d.] Report of the Conference on the Giving of Information on Birth Control by Public Health Authorities, 6d. These booklets are published by advocates of Birth Control. It seems to be realised that Catholics are the real opponents, though they are certainly not the only ones. The opposition at the Conference of the National Council of Women was voiced by Mrs. Laughton Mathews on behalf of St. Joan's S.P.A., but her opposition was not based on Catholic grounds alone, nor was she unsupported by non-Catholic bodies. We hope the opposition of St. Joan's S.P.A. will be mentioned in any new edition.

L. DE ALBERTI.

Notes and Comments.

The appeal for an *amende honorable* from England on occasion of the 500th anniversary of the martyrdom of St. Joan of Arc, will be formally launched at a public meeting at Kensington Town Hall on November 21st. His Eminence Cardinal Bourne will preside; a list of speakers will be given later. Please keep this date free.

As we have already announced, His Eminence is President of the Appeal, and among those who have already given the distinguished support of their names are: The Rt. Hon. Lord Tyrrell, P.C., G.C.M.G., K.C.B., K.C.V.O., British Ambassador to France. The Duke of Norfolk, The Countess of Warwick, The Viscountess Rhondda, Rt. Rev. W. F. Brown, Bishop of Pella, Very Rev. Bede Jarrett, O.P., Rev. H. R. L. Sheppard, Dean of Canterbury, Audrey Lady Petre, Sir James Melville, K.C., M.P., Solicitor General, Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson, Sir Henry Wood, Mus. Doc., F.R.A.M., Mrs. Corbett Ashby, Mrs. Despard, Rev. Dom Gilbert Higgins, C.R.L., Hon. Canon of Rouen Cathedral, Miss Gabrielle Jeffery, Miss Amy Johnson, C.B.E., Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, Mrs. Arthur Moore, Miss Eleanor Rathbone, M.P., Mr. Bernard Shaw, Miss Sybil Thorndike, Dr. Jane Walker.

* * * * *

We are glad to note that among the few Private Members Bills which reached the Statute Book, was the "Illegitimate Children (Scotland) Act," sponsored by the Duchess of Atholl, its object being to improve the position of unmarried mothers and their children.

* * * * *

The *Woman Teacher* (September 26th) gives an interesting comparison between the position of woman in 1870 and 1930. It covers education, sport, dress, property, aviation, athletics, music and industry. We recommend it as a tonic, especially to any woman who thinks our progress is too slow.

* * * * *

Still another Government Commission on troubles in distant lands, calls attention to the changing position of women. The Report of the Special Commission on the

Nigerian Riots recommends that more attention should be paid to the political influence of women.

* * * * *

A correspondent to the *Times* (August 25th), speaks of the riots as a revolt of women, "organized, developed, and carried out by the women of the country, without either the help or permission of their men folk, though probably with their tacit sympathy. The casualties resulting from the conflicts with the armed forces of the Crown were almost entirely women."

We are not surprised at the political knowledge of the women of Nigeria, as are some others, since a few years ago we published a petition to the Government from Nigerian women, setting forth their grievances, which was sent to the Council for the Representation of Women in the League of Nations, London, asking the help of British women.

The Commission's finding is that the cause of the disturbances was "the widespread belief through the affected areas that Government was about to impose a direct tax upon women. Government never had any intention of imposing a direct tax upon women, but the people of the areas had good grounds for supposing that such a measure was afoot."

* * * * *

Our gallant contemporary, *The Vote*, attains its majority on the 30th of this month. We offer our sincere congratulations to our colleagues. *The Vote* can be trusted to see straight in any question of equality between men and women. May it live long.

* * * * *

We hope all who can will give help to Miss Dorothy Evans, M.A., Barrister-at-law, who is standing as Labour Candidate in the South Paddington By-election. Miss Evans stands for the reforms we advocate, and promises, if returned to Parliament, to press for fair and adequate financial treatment for Catholic elementary and secondary schools.

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Our Annual Mass for deceased members, associates and benefactors will be celebrated at St. Patrick's, Soho, on November 2nd, at 10-30. We hope all who can will attend.

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 Subjection of Women.

In a recent number of the *Universe*, the Conductor of the Enquiry Bureau of that paper took an opportunity of saying that woman is essentially subordinate to man, "an idea which is an integral part of Catholic teaching."

The Editor of this paper addressed a letter to the Reverend Professor who conducts the Bureau, asking him to give a reference to a definition of the Church in support of his contention, and pointing out that Corinthians xi, 2-16, to which the Professor had alluded, is exceedingly obscure, and a striking illustration of the words of St. Peter to the effect that "our most dear brother Paul" wrote "certain things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, to their own destruction." (II, St. Peter, iii, 15, 16.).

In the *Universe* of September 26th, the Reverend Professor deals with this letter, but does not answer it, since he gives no reference to any definition of the Church, but again refers to Corinthians xi, 2-16. We submit that if the Church accepted those verses in their literal meaning, she would have to issue a special Catechism for women only.

Milton did accept them literally and so we have his abominable 'He for God only, she for God in him.'

The Professor then suggests that St. Paul's words should be studied in the light of St. Thomas.

For the benefit, or otherwise, of those

who do not know St. Thomas's opinion of women, we give the following quotations: "As regards the individual nature, woman is defective and misbegotten, for the active force in the male seed tends to the production of a perfect likeness in the masculine sex; while the production of woman comes from defect in the active force or from some material indisposition, or even from some external influence; such as that of a south wind, which is moist . . ." (As Aristotle observes) . . . "As regards human nature in general, woman is not misbegotten, but is included in nature's intention as directed to the work of generation." (Part 1, Q. xcii, Art. 1.).

"Woman is naturally subject to man, because in man the discretion of reason predominates . . ." (Ibid.).

[In reply to the objection that woman being an occasion of sin to man, should not have been created:]

"If God had deprived the world of all those things which proved an occasion of sin, the universe would have been imperfect. Nor was it fitting for the common good to be destroyed in order that individual evil might be avoided, especially as God is so powerful that He can direct any evil to a good end." (Ibid.).

. . . "in a secondary sense the image of God is found in man, and not in woman, for man is the beginning and end of woman; as God is the beginning and end of every creature." (Part 1, Q. xciii, Art. 4.).

. . . "Moreover, we are told that woman was made to be a help to man (Gen. ii, 18, 20). But she was not fitted to help man except in generation, because another man would have proved a more effective help in anything else." (Part 1, Q. xcvi, Art. 2.).

In his treatise on justice St. Thomas classes women with children and imbeciles, as being unable to give evidence owing to a defect in the reason. (See Part II, 2nd part; Q. lxx, Art. 3.).

When Pope Leo XIII issued his Encyclical on the Restoration of Christian Philosophy according to the mind of St. Thomas Aquinas, he made it clear that when he spoke of the *wisdom* of St. Thomas he used the word advisedly:

"We exhort all of you . . . to restore the golden wisdom of St. Thomas . . . We say the wisdom of St. Thomas; for it is not by any means in our mind to set before this age, as a standard, those things which may have been inquired into by Scholastic Doctors with too great subtlety; or anything taught by them with too little consideration, not agreeing with the investigations of a later age; or, lastly, anything that is not probable." (August 4th, 1879).

We could wish that the Heads of Seminaries would take these words of the illustrious Pontiff to heart, and in teaching their students avoid St. Thomas's opinion of woman. To send young priests into the world to face twentieth century women armed with such views as we have quoted above, is to court derision.

The Reverend Professor then suggests, with unconscious humour, that the Editor of this paper might study the article on Woman in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*. The suggestion being made in good faith, we have sent him a criticism of that article, which appeared in these columns fourteen years ago, written by the Editor on behalf of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, now St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance. We have never disguised our opinion of the article on Woman in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, but since it is an American publication, a demand for the amendment of it, to be effective, must come from Catholics in America. Until such time it must continue to disfigure the pages of a learned work, and bring discredit on those responsible for it.

We respectfully ask the Reverend Professor whether he can refer to a definition of the Church in support of his contention "that woman is essentially subordinate to man—an idea which is an integral part of Catholic teaching."

Are Ideas usually an integral part of Catholic doctrine?
 L. DE ALBERTI.

Dinner to Professor Mary Hayden.

On Thursday, September 18th, St. Joan's S.P.A. gave a dinner at Pinoli's, in honour of Professor Mary Hayden, of Dublin University. Professor Hayden, after paying a tribute to the fearlessness of St. Joan's S.P.A., gave an account of the position of women in Ireland. The Constitution of the Irish Free State gives equal rights to women with men, but the politicians manoeuvred to evade the Constitution—as for instance in the case of the Civil Service and Jury Service—a proceeding not unknown in other countries. The position of women was, she said, very different to what it was fifty years ago, and many avenues have been opened up to them. It was also to the credit of Ireland that she had sent a woman delegate to the International Labour Conference, and to the International Conference on the Codification of International Law. Miss Kathleen Fitzgerald, presiding, after welcoming Professor Hayden, sounded a note of warning to anyone who might look on the Franchise victory as the culminating point of the woman's movement, it was a step forward, but much remained to be done before equality of rights could be achieved.

Miss Monica O'Connor moved a vote of thanks on behalf of St. Joan's S.P.A., and of the younger women.

"THE FLASHLIGHT."

The Victory and Farewell Number of the *Flashlight*—the Organ of the Woman's Enfranchisement Association of South Africa—is not only good reading, but contains many portraits of our victorious colleagues, among them one of our member, Miss A. L. P. Dorman, and of the Editor of the *Flashlight*, Miss Jenner. We shall miss our contemporary, and hope it may have a successor to keep progressive women in touch with one another.

International Notes.

La Vie Catholique contains an excellent article by a French priest, M. Augustin Dezallie, giving an account of a society of women missionaries and catechists in the Argentine Republic, whose special duty is to keep the faith alive in outlying districts, and who do much to supply the shortage of priests. The Bishop of La Plata, Francisco Alberti, has taken the new order under his fraternal patronage. The nuns have already fifteen houses; it is said that they have worked marvels both among men and women. The order is now known as "The Institute of Missionary Catechists of the Christ King." The writer of the article pleads for the foundation of a similar order of "vicars" in France.

* * * *

A new International Society has been founded in Geneva, to be known as the Equal Rights International. It is an international body consisted of a governing council, on which sit representatives from different states, an executive committee and affiliated national and international bodies. Among the Founder Members of its Council are Mrs. Street of Australia, Viscountess Rhondda of Great Britain, Madame van der Schalk Schurter of Holland, Dr. Maria Loschi of Italy, and Miss Alice Paul of the United States. Its provisional chairman is Mrs. Helen Archdale, the well-known British feminist. Its headquarters will be in Geneva during the sessions of the Assembly, and elsewhere to suit the convenience of the governing council.

The new International is working to have the Equal Rights Treaty placed on the Agenda of the League Assembly in 1931. At a luncheon held at the Hotel Beau Rivage on September 9th, the guest of honour, Dr. Benes, of Czecho-Slovakia, discussed their policy with members of the governing council. "You will succeed," he said, "because the current of history is on your side. The only question is the date of your success."

* * * *

El Debate (Madrid) reports that the Ladies' League for Catholic Action of Solsona has addressed to the Spanish President of the Council a reasoned protest against the failure in Spain to include women among

the voters at the next elections. The protest points out that women, as much as men, contribute to the charges of the state, and are conscious of the duties of citizenship, and it claims that in the circumstances of the present time women would vote more calmly and disinterestedly than men, and would thus be of great use to the country.

* * * *

Mrs. Cousins, Hon. Sec. of the Women's Indian Association, Madras, and Editor of *Stri Dharma*, writes:

"I have read your notes in the CATHOLIC CITIZEN regarding India with much interest, and feel that it would help you to know that Indian women are doing already remarkable work as "educated citizens." The Simon Commission did not at all do justice to the large extent over which women's work is bringing them at present. Indeed, that section of the Simon Report is remarkably ill-informed. The enclosed list was made in 1923, and yet the Simon Commission seem to know nothing of the details which it has thus collected. In each of the sections there are now twice as many women functioning as at that date."

* * * *

Mrs. Cousins encloses a long list of women doing public work: members of legislative Councils, municipal councillors, members of district boards, hon. women magistrates, J.P's., etc.

* * * *

We are glad to note that Roumania has abolished State Regulation of Vice; this is due to the efforts of enlightened Roumanian women, to whom we offer our sincere congratulations.

* * * *

We note with indignation the efforts being made by the Government of India to whittle down the Sarda Act (to prevent child marriages). *Stri Dharma* records that protests are being forwarded to the Government. The All-Indian Women's Conference took up the matter, and sent a mandate to the Council of State to keep the Act intact and unamended, and sent a protest to the Government. The Bill was passed in the Legislative Assembly by an over-whelming majority of 67 to 14.

A. A. B.

Methods of Combating the Mui Tsai System.

Recently I had the privilege of meeting the authors of *Child Slavery in Hong Kong*, which was reviewed in THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN for July-August. They are very anxious that people should be encouraged to buy the book, which as it is published at the low price of 2s. 6d., should be within the reach of many. It should be mentioned to friends that the book is published by the Sheldon Press, so that they may have no difficulty in getting it.

The British Public must be roused up to demand speedy liberation of the child slaves of Hong Kong. There are those who stubbornly deny the existence of this slavery, and others, who hearing of it, live on unconcerned. The Haslewoods would like sermons, Press articles, and more reviews of their book. A friend to whom I spoke of the Mui Tsai System the other day, said that she had seen something about it in the paper, but it was evident that she had let it slip from her mind. We cannot let it be forgotten.

Commander Haslewood advised as good tactics that letters should be addressed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies to ask what steps are being taken by the Hong Kong Government to bring the system of child slavery to an end. If the Colonial Office is pestered with letters it will urge the Hong Kong Government to action.

Mrs. Haslewood praised St. Joan's S.P.A. for the part which it has taken in the cause of the Mui Tsai. If every member were to write to the Colonial Office, and get friends and relatives to do so also, not just once, but from time to time to ask how affairs are progressing, the persistent inquiry ought to have its effect.

Fear of offending the influential Chinese in Hong Kong kept the Government from enforcing the law; may fear of Public Opinion in England make them carry it out.

Yet it is ardently to be desired that not merely the paltry motive of human respect, but a real change of spirit may cause them to free the Mui Tsai. Our patron is essentially a saint of action, who with the weapon of the spirit delivered her country from its enemies. Can we not ask for something of her piety and her courage; and, with the help of her prayers gain deliverance for the little slaves of Hong Kong; and can we not gain repentance for those who stand guilty in regard to them.

K. C.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH.

Hon. Secretary: Miss N. S. Parnell, B.A.,
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The course in "Club Leadership" has now come to an end and several of our members have already been appointed to parish clubs, either as leaders or as instructors. In this new sphere of activity we hope that they will indoctrinate the rising generation of women with the ideals for which St. Joan stands.

Our participation in the Course has brought us quite a tangible reward, since the Liverpool Union of Girls' Clubs are willing to allow us to hold our meetings in their new premises. As these are much more pleasant and more central than our present rendezvous, we feel sure that our members will welcome the change.

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TREASURER'S NOTE.

The annual Green, White and Gold Fair will be held at the Caxton Hall on November 25th and 26th. St. Joan's will as usual have a stall, and members are asked to send in articles for sale any time now. This is our big money making event of the autumn, and everyone is urged to do their best to make the amount realized a record one. Volunteers to help at the Stall on both days are also needed. All goods and offers of help to be addressed to Miss Barry at 55 Berners Street.

A Jumble Sale will also be held in the near future, so please bear this in mind.

VERA LAUGHTON MATHEWS,
Hon. Treasurer.

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