

THE
CATHOLIC CITIZEN

VOLUME XV, 1929.



ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE,
55 BERNERS STREET, LONDON, W. 1.

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WOMEN'S SERVICE
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NOT TO BE TAKEN AWAY

THE Catholic Citizen

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

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15th JANUARY 1929.

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.

The Emancipation of Women.

BY HELEN DOUGLAS IRVINE M.A.

The little history of women's political emancipation* sponsored by St. Joan's is a modest but unique contribution to the literature of its subject. It attempts to trace the history of the women's movement not only, like Mrs. Strachey's admirable and far larger work, from the time when women began consciously to make citizenship their goal, but also through the earlier period when their progress and regress had no determined direction. Moreover, like no other book written on this subject in English, it estimates fairly the extent to which the Church and Catholic teaching helped women to win their just rights.

The purely historical aspect of the subject is a fascinating one. Miss Challoner, in the earlier chapters of this book, makes very clear that the initial injustice was connected with the institution of property. Property came to be regarded, in most societies, as vested in the male, even though a female might be its interim holder and its transmitter, when male heirs failed. Polyandry, since it rendered the paternity of possible

heirs uncertain, became inconvenient, and opprobrium therefore attached to it as it did not to polygamy. Polygamy, which degrades women, and polyandry, which degrades men, are, when either prevails exclusively, alike incompatible with equality between the sexes. This condition is consistent only with two of the institutions by which relations between the sexes can be regulated. Men and women can be equal where there is sexual promiscuity and where there is monogamy accompanied by monandry, that is, where there is no order at all and where there is the good order enjoined in the Old and New Testament and by the Catholic Church.

Miss Challoner draws a striking contrast between the "spirit of romance and innocence" which breathes in the marriage stories of the Old Testament and the very different conceptions held by even the greatest writers of classical antiquity. Even Plato includes women and children in the property which must be held in common in his ideal state. While it is true that in practice the position of women, in the republics both of Greece and of Rome, was frequently far more honourable than that conceded to them in theory, since they owed it to their own qualities and the good sense of those about them, it is as true that their theoretical status degraded them actually. The introduction of Christianity wrought an "extraordinary revolution" for them. "The

* *Towards Citizenship. A Handbook of Women's Emancipation.* Compiled by Phillis C. Challoner, M.A., and Vera Laughton Mathews, M.B.E., with foreword by Millicent Garrett Fawcett, G.B.E., L.L.D., and the Right Rev. W. F. Brown, Bishop of Pella. (P. S. King & Son; 2s.)

infant Church," says Miss Challoner, "is gathered round Mary, the Mother of Jesus, to whose unique position in the Church women owe, under God, their high position in Christian law. There is no difference between men and women there, in moral standard or in spiritual worth or in the lack of it." Miss Challoner also does justice to St. Paul, whom it has been the fashion to decry as an antifeminist. She recalls to us Prisca, Aquila, Tabitha or Dorcas, Lydia, Phoebe, whom he so greatly trusted and on whose co-operation he depended.

In dealing with the later Middle Ages, Miss Challoner does not minimize the fact that St. Thomas and the other schoolmen injured women by assigning to them, in the system to which they reduced the universe, an inferior rank. But she reminds us of the women who were in these centuries living witnesses to the schoolmen's fallibility, not only glorious women saints and great stateswomen, but also thinkers like Cristina of Pisa who wrote, alluding to the scholastic dicta on her sex, that "the aphorisms of philosophers are not articles of faith but simply the mists of error and self-deception."

She shews further that the Reformation brought to women a very grave loss, especially because the closing of the convents meant the closing of the girls' schools, and because the decay of chivalry and, most disastrous of all, the denial of her rightful place to Our Lady, lessened the honour in which women were held. When the age of individualism set in, Protestant societies found themselves with the low view of women's position inherited from the patriarchal order, and without any of the conceptions by which Catholicism and romanticism had severally modified this view. Economic forces, pressing on this individualist order, tended invariably to push the low lower still, and therefore to depress women more and more. Women had eventually to fight their way up from the bottom.

The story of their war is related by Mrs. Laughton Mathews in the latter chapters of our book. Like all the best battle stories, it is told by one who was herself in the thick of the fight. It is spirited, brief and

comprehensive, exactly what is needed to make the stirring days of strife live in the imaginations of the young women of to-day and to-morrow, as they do in the memories of their seniors.

"Towards Citizenship" should be read for pleasure and instruction by all Catholics who care for the emancipation of women, and by all others for their conversion. The introductions, written by Bishop Brown and by Dame Millicent Fawcett, are a double guarantee of soundness.

The King.

The members of St. Joan's S.P.A., in common with all His Majesty's subjects, rejoice at the better bulletins now issued, and hope His Majesty will soon recover his usual health.

Mrs. Chapman Catt.

We offer our sincere congratulations and good wishes to Mrs. Chapman Catt, who celebrated her 70th birthday on January 9. Mrs. Chapman Catt was for twenty years President of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, which she founded in 1902. Mrs. Chapman Catt has endeared herself to many thousands of women all over the world. Feminists owe her a deep debt of gratitude, so indeed do all women.

The New Register.

The new Parliamentary Register will be published on January 24 in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, and on Feb. 16 in Scotland. We urge all our readers to make sure that their names are on the register, which comes into force on May 1 and continues in force till October 15, 1930.

The National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship has issued a penny pamphlet to be obtained from 15 Dean's Yard, London, S.W. 1, which gives all information about the qualifications required by voters; how to get on the absent Voters' List; the procedure for lodging complaints, etc.

Notes and Comments.

We wish all our readers a very happy New Year. The year just come to an end brought us the great victory of Equal Franchise, and we hope 1929 holds other feminist victories. There is no need to remind readers of the *Catholic Citizen* that we have a long way to go before real equality between men and women is achieved, but Equal Franchise facilitates the work that lies ahead.

* * * *

At a recent meeting of the Equal Political Rights Campaign Committee, to which St. Joan's S.P.A. is affiliated, the following resolution, moved from the chair was passed unanimously: "That there is still need for the work of the Equal Political Rights Campaign Committee, and that it shall therefore continue in being." In future the Committee will be known as the Equal Rights Committee. The following resolution was also passed unanimously at the meeting: "That this Committee, representing twenty-two Women's Organizations, welcomes the fact that Lord Clarendon, in his proposals for the Reform of the House of Lords, recognises that Peeresses in their own right should be eligible for membership of the Upper House."

* * * *

We hear with pleasure that our member Miss Nancy Stewart Parnell has been invited to stand as a Liberal Candidate at the General Election. We hope to see her in Parliament, she would make an admirable M.P., and one in whose hands the interests of women would be safe.

* * * *

We congratulate Miss Proctor-Gregg on her appointment as Assistant Principal at the Ministry of Transport. Miss Proctor-Gregg is the first woman to hold such an appointment, and won her position in the recent Civil Service examination in competition with men. There were two women in the first ten, and five in the first twenty successful candidates.

* * * *

We remind our readers that the book "Towards Citizenship," reviewed in our

leading article, can be obtained from the office, 55 Berners Street, W.1. price 2s. 1½d. post office.

Congratulations.

We offer our congratulations to Mrs. Laughton Mathews and Mr. Mathews on the birth of a son. We shall expect "Christopher" to grow up an ardent champion of feminism.

We have also to congratulate our members, Miss A. M. E. Murphy and Miss Guzman on entering the Carmelites.

* * * *

Miss V. Stephenson, a barrister, has been briefed to defend William J. Holmyard, accused of the murder of his grandfather. The case comes up in the Central Court this month. Miss Stephenson is the first woman, we believe, to defend in a murder trial.

St. Joan's S.P.A.

"Our International Responsibilities."

The first of our monthly meetings will be held on Monday, January 21, at 6 p.m., at St. Patrick's Club, Soho Square, when Mrs. Corbett Ashby, President of the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship, will speak on our International Responsibilities. The chair will be taken by Viscountess Dupplin. The meeting is open to the public and admission is free. This meeting will be of special interest to our members and readers, and we hope to have a crowded audience.

Mr. J. B. Toner's Recital.

Mr. Jean Baptiste Toner, who needs no introduction to our readers, is giving a recital at the Grotrian Hall, on Thursday, February 7, at 8-30 p.m. It is an event which no true lover of music should miss. A varied programme includes Beethoven, Chopin, Grieg, Liszt, Handel, Debussy, etc.

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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Report of the Street Offences Committee.

This long awaited Report was published last month. It is a curious mixture, and from reports in the daily press it might have been inferred that the Committee had conceded all the demands of the societies working for an equal moral standard. The statement issued by St. Joan's S.P.A. welcomes the recommendation that the various existing laws in England and Wales directed against solicitation be repealed, and a simple enactment be substituted of general application to all persons. It welcomes the recommendation for the abolition of special laws directed against "common prostitutes," but agrees with the memorandum of Miss Kelly and Mrs. Morison Millar recommending the abolition of Section 3 of the Vagrancy Act of 1824, which also relates to "common prostitutes." Had their colleagues agreed to include this Section, their recommendation respecting these special laws would have been stronger.

The chief objection to the Report is the creation in clause 2 of a new offence—that of importuning for immoral purposes. The committee are of opinion that "The proof of such conduct is not dependent upon evidence of the state of mind of the person importuned. It can properly be proved by the evidence of an observer who can speak to the act of the accused."

By *observer* the Committee must mean that the word of the policeman, who arrests

the alleged offender is to be taken as adequate evidence. If the aggrieved person is not to be called as witness, why should any passer-by come forward? The policeman, then, is to judge whether the offender was importunate, and whether the motive was immoral.

"Where the accused pleads not guilty the ordinary rules of evidence will apply and if the accused claims to be a person of good character it will be competent to cross-examine on previous acts of misconduct." It seems to us that when a woman admits she is of immoral character, the position will be much the same as at present, it will be her word against the policeman's. In clause 4, which makes it an offence for any person to frequent any street or public place for the purpose of prostitution or solicitation so as to constitute a nuisance, the Committee recommend "that the evidence of one or more of the persons aggrieved be essential to a conviction." They should certainly have made the same recommendation in clause 2. Moreover it is to be regretted that the Committee should recommend action to be taken against the *motive* of an act, rather than against the Act itself. A nuisance is a nuisance whatever the underlying motive, and the law should take cognizance of the nuisance only.

The Public Places (Order) Bill first introduced by Lady Astor in 1925 on behalf

of the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, was far simpler than the recommendations of this Report, and in our opinion would have been more effective. The Bill asked for the abolition of the existing solicitation laws and the substitution of a single enactment directed against any person causing annoyance in any street or public place, proceedings to be taken only on complaint of the aggrieved person. The Bill had the support of many societies.

The Committee realize the importance of women police, but as mentioned in the statement issued by St. Joan's S.P.A., their services should not be confined purely to preventive work. In this respect we agree wholeheartedly with memorandum 5, signed by four members of the Committee.

L. de Alberti.

Inez Ortuzar has been appointed Consul for Chili at Hull. She is the first woman foreign Consul in Great Britain.

The same paper announces that a Maintenance Orders Amendment Bill has been passed in New Zealand which enforces in that country Maintenance Orders made in Britain or any British State or Protectorate, including mandated territory.

* * * *

L'Action Féminine (Luxembourg) informs us that at the recent municipal elections in Luxembourg there were 32 women Candidates, 3 of whom were successful. One of there was our friend and co-religionist Madame Schleimer-Kill, the able Secretary of the *Action Féminine*. We offer our heartiest congratulations to her and her colleagues.

* * * *

The *Bulletin of the International Council of Women* records the opening of the "Maison de la Femme" at Bucarest in the presence of Queen Marie of Roumania. The building has been erected by the N.C.W. of Roumania led by its energetic President, Princess Alexandrine Cantacuzene.

* * * *

From *La Française* we learn that six women sit in the new Danish Senate amongst them being Mrs. Elize Petersen, President of the Feminist Organization "Dansk Kvindesarnfund."

F. A. B.

International Notes.

Feminism in Poland seems to follow much the same course as elsewhere. In *La Femme Polonoise*, the editor warns her readers against thinking that all is won with the possession of the Vote. Much water, she says, must flow under the bridge before equal rights are won. Theoretically, almost all professions and trades in Poland are opened to women, but in practice there are many employments to which women are not admitted and there is still a "prodigious" difference between the pay of men and women. One of the immediate reforms to be undertaken by the Feminist Societies is the revision of the many laws unfavourable to women, especially those which are a legacy of the Code Napoléon.

* * * *

"*Le Mouvement Feministe*" (Geneva) announces the formation of a joint national Committee to organize a petition throughout Switzerland in favour of a Federal Women Suffrage Bill. We regret the absence of any organization of Catholic women among the dozen national organizations which have already agreed to join in this campaign.

* * * *

In *Jus Suffragii* we read that Señorita

Annual Meeting.

For Members of St. Joan's S.P.A. only.

The Annual Meeting will be held on March 16th. Resolutions for the Agenda, and Nominations for Committee, duly proposed and seconded, must reach the Secretary not later than February 4.

No nominations can be accepted unless the consent of the nominees have been previously obtained.

Will members please take this as the official notice.

Queen Elizabeth.

Miss Gwen John's clever and well written biography of Queen Elizabeth* paints a picture of that great Englishwoman which is full of life. Miss John is a serious historian and her portrait is an authentic one, but she is no dry-as-dust chronicler and she writes with the feeling which makes history into literature. With admirable dignity she disregards the tittle-tattle by which too many writers about Elizabeth have obscured this queen's life and character—gossip about love affairs and illnesses and such stories about foibles and vanities as have been retailed by the court of every sovereign of strong personality. Miss John has, as every biographer should have, a warm sympathy with her subject, and her own bias is evidently in favour of the rule which is not governed by abstract principles but aims only at the prosperity and order of the ruled. Therefore she condones, implicitly rather than explicitly, the execution of Mary Stewart which was so highly expedient for the stability of the English government and the continued peace of England. Similarly, she is merely repelled by the tragically unsuccessful efforts of Mary Tudor to bring England back into the Church. She is stirred by Elizabeth's nationalism, a quality which was natural in the daughter of Anne Boleyn but which was, none the less, finely displayed by her. Elizabeth was patriotic where she might have been pettily nationalist. The two Maries—the queen Elizabeth succeeded and the queen she got rid of—were, on the other hand, of Europe rather than of any one nation. Their own view of their sovereignty was mediaeval and out of fashion in the sixteenth century, whereas Elizabeth, a daughter of the Renaissance, had the luck to have the conception of royalty which was popular in her own day.

Miss John is again in sympathy with Elizabeth's abhorrence of rigidly dogmatic religions, and she is so consistently, since such faiths often hinder earthly happiness and material prosperity, of nations as of individuals. It would, however, have been

* QUEEN ELIZABETH, By Gwen John. (Heffer, Cambridge, 3/6 net.)

fair to acknowledge that Elizabeth sought, as she did, to steer a conciliatory middle way between Catholicism and Puritanism, not only for politic motives, but also because she was, as she shewed over and over again to the despair of her ministers, morbidly averse from absolute definition. Moreover, the middle road proved not to be passable. Elizabeth's religion of compromise was rejected by the more ardent and the more logical of her subjects, and she was driven to persecute both Catholics and Puritans—a point to which Miss John gives insufficient prominence. The Catholics fared worse at the hands of the government than the Puritans, both because the course of Elizabeth's foreign policy obliged her to side with the Protestant party in Europe and because her ministers were convinced Protestants. Historians of the reign should not forget the many English martyrs who went to their death after the enactment of the Recusancy Laws, some of them, like Father Campion, after torture, and the many English Catholics who were tortured in order to induce them to give information which might lead to the apprehension of priests. For the last thirty years for which Elizabeth reigned it was a penal offence in England either to hear or say Mass or to abstain from regular attendance at the Protestant parish church. If Miss John had given their due weight to these terrible facts, the very distinguished reviewer of her book in the *Women's Leader* would not have been misled into making a contrast between the religious intolerance of Queen Mary Tudor's reign and the toleration she imputes to the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Religious toleration was never realized in the sixteenth century. It began to flourish in a more indifferent age.

H. D. I.

Review.

"THE LIFE OF MARY WARD." By Maria Rubatscher. Tr. from the German by Mother Mary Salome, I.B.V.M. (Butzon and Bercker. 2s. 3d. Obtainable from the Bar Convent, York.)

We have here a beautifully produced little book giving the life of Mary Ward

(1585-1645), the foundress of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin. All Catholic Englishwomen should be justly proud of this great fellow-countrywoman, who was the pioneer of the uncloistered religious orders for women. Following as closely as possible the Rule of the Jesuits, Mary Ward wished her nuns to do in their sphere what the men were doing in the Society of Jesus. This idea, which has been realized many times in the modern world, met with scant encouragement in the seventeenth century. The Institute was suppressed in 1630, but afterwards revived and developed rapidly along the lines of the first scheme, until at length, in 1703, its Rule was approved by Clement XI, and in 1877 Pius IX recognized it as an Institute.

This book, which contains excellent reproductions from the "Painted Life," made in Rome between 1645 and 1677, should form a good introduction to the fuller works on the life of this great foundress.

S. H.

Annual Subscriptions.

Annual subscriptions to St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance and to the "Catholic Citizen" fall due this month. Members and subscribers can save much labour at the office, by sending subscriptions in good time. Subscription to the "Catholic Citizen," 2/6; minimum subscription to the Alliance, 1/. One shilling does not really cover even the postage of notices in the year, members are, therefore, asked to increase their subscription, if they possibly can.

The Consultative Committee of Women's Organizations has come to an end. It served a useful purpose in its day, but in present circumstances its work can be safely left to others. It was closely connected with Lady Astor, and a luncheon in her honour was given by the constituent societies.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH.
Hon. Secretary: Miss N. S. Parnell, B.A.,
45 Falkner Street, Liverpool.

The last of the series of meetings intended to help new voters to choose their political party was held on December 10, when Mrs. Shilston Watkins spoke on "Why I am a Liberal." Our hostess on this occasion was Mrs. Gordon, to whom we offer our best thanks.

The Hon. Secretary has a number of copies of "Towards Citizenship," and would be glad if members would apply to her for them. The price of the book is 2s. 1½d., post free.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS.

December 1 to 31.

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TREASURER'S NOTE.

Our members will hardly require a reminder to send their annual subscriptions promptly! St. Joan's Alliance does not keep any appreciable balance from one year to another. The money is expended in work as soon as raised. Therefore the subscriptions are needed immediately to carry on in the New Year. We thank Miss M. O'Connor for the £1 handed over as the result of the Whist Drive which she recently organized at her home. The result of Mrs. Kerr's Dance on New Year's Eve will be announced next month.

G. JEFFERY.

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

NON-PARTY.

Office—55, Berners St., Oxford St., London, W.
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OBJECT.

To band together Catholics of both sexes, in order to secure the political, social and economic equality between men and women, and to further the work and usefulness of Catholic women as citizens.

MEMBERSHIP.

All Catholic women are eligible as Members, who approve the object and methods, and will pay a minimum annual subscription of 1s. Men are invited to join as Associates, on the same conditions, with the exception that they may not elect or be elected to the Executive.

The International Woman Suffrage News

The Monthly Organ of

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FOR SUFFRAGE AND EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

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At the present time "Jus Suffragii" forms a unique link between the women of all nations. It contains articles, reports and letters from all countries and constitutes a valuable record of woman's activities. Sample copies may be had free of charge on application to the Office—190 Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W. 1.

THE

Social Catholic Movement in Great Britain

By GEORGINA PUTNAM McENTEE, Ph.D.,

Instructor in History, Hunter College, New York City.
A History of the Social Reform Movement amongst British Catholics from the Restoration of the Hierarchy to the present time.

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Compiled by PHYLLIS C. CHALLONER, M.A. and
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for

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