

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. XVII, No. 9.

15th OCTOBER, 1931.

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 World Disarmament Conference, 1932.

NANCY STEWART PARNELL, B.A.

It will be remembered that "the Peace of Christ in the Realm of Christ" was the inspiring motto chosen by the present Pope on ascending the papal throne in 1922. In the years that have elapsed since then, few things can have been more cheering to His Holiness than the news of the summoning of the first world disarmament conference to Geneva in 1932. Pope after Pope of recent times has blessed the efforts of those who have worked for disarmament in a hostile world, and now, at last, a really serious movement is on foot "to make less frequent and less sanguinary the terrible game of war," to quote from the address of Pope Leo XIII to the Sacred College on April 11th, 1899.

One has to acknowledge, of course, that many of those responsible for the Conference are not in the least actuated by spiritual or idealistic motives. Many of them have come to apparent agreement with the Pope's views on disarmament, via the desperate need for reductions in their national budgets, or through the insistent pressure of public opinion, or merely through unwillingness to be left out of an important international move. In spite of the mixed motives of its sponsors, the mere prospect of such a conference should fill all peace-lovers with joy, for, as several Popes have pointed out, there can never be a genuine and permanent peace in the world (even with an elaborate organisation like the League of Nations to promote it) as long as armaments flourish unchecked; and it is generally agreed that this menace can only be removed by simultaneous international action. For twelve

years now (and longer, of course, in many cases) believers in disarmament, as a vital factor in the establishment of peace, have had to content themselves with paper promises, such as those contained in the Versailles and Locarno treaties, with the loud lipservice of politicians, with the lengthy, but mostly barren discussions of technical experts, and with the poor results, even in their restricted sphere, achieved by the great naval powers at Washington, Geneva, and London respectively. Now, at last, we are to see a highly organised and universal effort (for even Russia and the United States are to participate) at accomplishing this gigantic, but all-important task of world disarmament.

For women, pride, as well as joy, may legitimately enter into our feelings, as we contemplate the near approach of this momentous Conference, for undoubtedly, by our work for peace in all countries through such organisations as the Women's International League we have helped to bring it to pass. One can only regret that for all their interest women are not likely to have any direct share in its deliberations. The more one studies the dreary accounts of official, post-war discussions on disarmament, and the more one recalls the various political and technical obstacles raised, the more one agrees with Shakespeare (in many ways a redoubtable feminist) when he makes Queen Isabel, in "Henry V," say of a peace conference:

"Haply, a woman's voice may do some good

When articles, too nicely urg'd, are stood on."



Considering, also, the extraordinary revolutionary character of the whole idea of disarmament, one could not be sorry to hear that a large number of women had been invited, for, in their almost unanimous and passionate zeal, they would, at least, save the 20th century from Francis Thompson's just censure of the 19th, that it was "half-hearted, desiring Peace, but not the means of it."

The Draft Disarmament Convention, on which the Conference is to base its labours, is by no means an ideal document for the purpose, though it has its redeeming features. It is cheering to see so much agreement among the nations on this once scornfully rejected proposal, and its extremely business-like and matter-of-fact handling of the whole projects should disabuse anyone of the idea that disarmament is merely a dream of impracticable idealists. Among its sixty articles are some invaluable clauses, notably those arranging for an interchange of information on armaments and for the establishment of a Permanent Disarmament Commission, while other articles depend for their value on the amount of reductions voluntarily undertaken by each government. How generous and how sincere will be those offers depends almost entirely on the attitude of the people concerned—a tremendous responsibility for every citizen! The new idea of budgeting limitation (though liable to abuse and unsatisfactory as the only check on armaments) should also commend itself to the intelligent citizen as giving him or her a direct interest in the process of disarmament.

On the other hand, there are some serious defects in the proposals. The present writer was rather shocked by the retention of conscription in the scheme, with but slight limitations, while it is fairly generally agreed that the framers of the Convention should have seized that opportunity to limit the numbers of the larger (and, therefore, easily countable) weapons of war, such as tanks and big guns, as was done in the case of Germany. Both expert and public opinion on the whole would have welcomed, also, the abolition of warships over 10,000 tons, as being more or less obsolete. A graver defect still is the failure to deal adequately with the newer and deadlier weapons provided by modern science. Of the suggestions concerning aerial warfare, Lord Cecil has spoken with frankness, describing them as "the only great blunder, the only great blot in the scheme." Lastly, all people of goodwill and all who regard disarmament, not simply as a matter of economic expediency, but as a contribution to

the peace of the world, will deplore the spirit of Article 53, which seeks to keep Germany and her late Allies permanently disarmed at their present low and quite arbitrary level. Fortunately, we have time and opportunity to remedy these and other defects, and, in any case, it will be the temper of the delegates rather than the text of the Convention that will finally decide all such controversial issues.

In conclusion, it is scarcely possible to exaggerate the importance of the tremendous responsibility that rests upon each one of us to do what we can to make it a success. We must not expect miracles from it, but we have the right to demand that it makes a good beginning of the great work of disarmament. If it fails to do this, civilization is probably doomed to extinction, and with it all the fair things for which, as Catholics or as feminists, we and our predecessors have striven. If it succeeds, these things will have a chance to grow and flourish in the war-free atmosphere as never before, and the world will be immeasurably worthier of the Kingship of Christ—the Prince of Peace.

In striving for this glorious goal, the Catholics in this country may join with their fellow-Catholics abroad who are already at work, especially in France, where a large number of Catholic societies have united to issue an impressive manifesto on the subject. Furthermore, the Pope has once again reminded us of our responsibilities in the matter in his Apostolic Epistle of October 2nd. We can press on, therefore, fearlessly in our efforts to bring "the peace of Christ into the realm of Christ" through the forthcoming Disarmament Conference.

#### OBITUARY.

We record with deep regret the death of Miss Nellie Blackledge, one of our earliest members, for whom we ask the prayers of our readers.—R.I.P.

St. Joan's S.P.A. has also suffered another loss by the death of Dr. Margaret Lamont, who died recently at Port Said. Her life was devoted to the work of Medical Missions in India, China and Africa. It was while she was in Uganda that Dr. Lamont, as a member of ours, sent us information respecting a form of "Regulation" of venereal disease, which she considered highly objectionable. She was dismissed for refusing to carry out instructions, but later received a certain indemnity. The matter was taken up by ourselves and others. We ask our readers to pray for this devoted woman.—R.I.P.

## Notes and Comments.

### GENERAL ELECTION.

As we go to press the General Election is in full swing. We publish in another column the questionnaire issued by St. Joan's Alliance. Some persons may think that, as the election is the result of a financial crisis and trade depression, it is unnecessary to stress the points on our programme. To ignore these questions would be a lamentable mistake.

We are alive to the greatness of the issues at stake, yet at a time when the whole financial, economic and industrial position is under review it is essential that any scheme of reconstruction should be founded on justice and equality between men and women. The new Government may be in office for some years; the reforms for which we stand cut across party politics. It is more necessary than ever to stand firm in our demand for equal pay and opportunities; it is at a time such as this that women are sacrificed.

We ask our members, therefore, to make use of these questions by sending them to their respective candidates, or by asking questions on these lines at political meetings.

St. Joan's S.P.A., which is composed of members of every shade of political opinion, will give help to women candidates who support its programme. Readers are asked to send offers of help to Miss Barry, 55 Berners Street, W.1., mentioning the candidate for whom they would like to work. Clerical work is also needed and, of course, funds.

### NATIONALITY OF MARRIED WOMEN.

The following resolution was passed by the First Commission of the 13th Assembly on September 22nd, 1931, on the motion of Great Britain, supported by a number of other Powers:

"Whereas the Committee of Representatives of Women's International Organisations on Nationality created by 62nd session of the Council of the League, has submitted to the Assembly a Report expressing disapproval of the Hague Nationality Convention inasmuch as that Convention differentiates between men and women as regards nationality, and

"Whereas the Committee of representatives of Women's International Organisations has recommended to the Assembly that it take steps to bring about the reconsideration of the Hague Nationality Convention, bearing in mind the principle of equality between men and women,

"The Assembly requests the Council, in harmony with the recommendation of the Hague Codification Conference, 1930, to transmit to all

governments the Report of the Secretary General on the question of nationality of women, together with the Minutes of the First Commission on the report, requesting the governments to submit observations on nationality of women, including their views regarding the Hague Convention for reconsideration by XIIIth Assembly, to which the Women's Consultative Committee's observations will be communicated."

The Assembly thanks the Committee of Representatives of Women's International Organisations for its Report.

\* \* \* \*

In our next issue we shall deal fully with the question of the nationality of married women, which is of great importance to all who are working for the raising of the status of women.

\* \* \* \*

In connection with the problem of disarmament, with which our leading article deals, we note with pleasure the strong plea put forward by Señor Madariaga (Spain) in the Third Committee of the League of Nations (on Disarmament), for associating women with this work. They are certainly as much concerned with the problem as are men.

\* \* \* \*

We are glad to note that Madame Curie (Poland) has been re-elected a Vice-President of the International Commission for Intellectual Co-operation of the League of Nations.

\* \* \* \*

A recent number of the *Catholic Gazette*, which now exchanges with the *Catholic Citizen*, had an interesting account of the re-introduction into England of the Canons Regular of the Lateran about fifty years ago, and of the help and friendship they received from the Canonesses of St. Augustine. We were glad to read of the early days of our good friend, Dom Gilbert Higgins, C.R.L., who in a recent letter, speaks of himself as an old and staunch friend of St. Joan's S.P.A., as indeed we know him to be, and tells us that he thinks and prays for all who are working for the Alliance, for which we earnestly thank him.

\* \* \* \*

We offer our cordial congratulations to our member, Dr. Delia Moclair, on the birth of a son.

### ANNUAL MASS.

The Annual Mass for the repose of the souls of members, associates, and benefactors, of St. Joan's S.P.A., will be offered at St. Patrick's, Soho, on Sunday, November 1st, at 10-30. We ask our members to make an effort to 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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## Florence Nightingale.\*

Mrs. O'Malley gives us, in this new history of Florence Nightingale, an account of the first thirty-six years of her life. The tale is well known, but Mrs. O'Malley has had access to a large number of personal notes, journals and letters hitherto unpublished. Consequently the book reads more like an autobiography. We feel that we are listening to the authentic voice of Florence Nightingale, and the sentimental picture of the Lady with the Lamp fades before the stronger representation of a heroic pioneer. To realize the wonderful achievements of the true Florence, one must remember the position of women in the early nineteenth century, when a young lady of her station in life was a sheltered hot-house bloom protected "lest the winds of heaven visit her face too roughly." The Nightingales were wealthy, but not all the luxury and culture of Florence's home could satisfy the craving of her spirit. On February 7th, 1837, she noted the exact day, she had felt a call, she did not understand its meaning, but wherever it might lead she was resolved to follow. She was already hard at work among the poor, and in nursing the sick. The social round became painful to her, she was haunted by the sufferings of humanity.

"The only way to make life real is to do something to relieve human misery." This conviction, Mrs. O'Malley tells us, had taken a firm hold upon Florence's mind while she was, in outward appearance, still enjoying the life of the conventional young lady. She was an enigma and a sore trial to her wondering family, though later she won over her father to aid her in her plans. In spite of all opposition she managed to get trained in nursing and finished that training with the Sisters of St.

Vincent de Paul, in Paris.

She was ready when the great call came, and at the request of Sidney Herbert, then Secretary at War, she went out to the Crimea to nurse the wounded soldiers, whose unnecessary sufferings, due to official blundering, had aroused public indignation. Mrs. O'Malley gives us a vivid picture of the terrible state of things Miss Nightingale and her nurses found when they reached the Crimea, but Florence, fired by a love of humanity, fought for the sick and wounded, and triumphed over official stupidity and the opposition she encountered from the Medical Staff and others.

Her own nurses, too, were a trial; some of the "professional nurses" were addicted to drink and often unreliable, nursing could scarcely be called a profession in those days. The Irish nuns were a thorn in her side: they did not take to her, nor she to them, but her beloved Reverend Mother, from Bermondsey, with her Sisters of Mercy, never failed her. She had long envied the Catholic Religious Orders, which provided an outlet for women's work, and realised that the Catholic Church set a high value on their help. She loved the Reverend Mother and the nuns from the Convent of Mercy at Bermondsey, and in fulfilment of her promise it was to them that her first visit was paid on her return to London.

Florence Nightingale was born before her time, but it is strange to think that she was still living, half-forgotten, a few years ago. What did she think, we wonder, of the changing world around her, or did it pass her by unnoticed?

L. DE ALBERTI.

\* Florence Nightingale, 1820-56. By I. B. O'Malley. (Thornton and Butterworth, 21s.)

## St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance.

(NON-PARTY)

## General Election Questionnaire, 1931.

If returned to Parliament will you press for:

- 1.—EQUAL POLITICAL RIGHTS.  
The admission of Peeresses in their own right to a seat and vote in the House of Lords?
- 2.—EQUAL MORAL STANDARD.  
(a) The abolition of the present unjust solicitation laws and the substitution of a law dealing with street solicitation by general legislation against annoyance or molestation, under which the evidence of the person annoyed or molested would be necessary in order to obtain a conviction?  
(b) The abolition of all brothels known to the authorities within the jurisdiction of the British empire?
- 3.—EQUAL PAY AND OPPORTUNITIES.  
(a) Legislation in favour of equal pay for equal work and equal opportunities for training, entry and promotion in the Civil Service?  
(b) Abolition of restrictive legislation for women and the basing of all labour regulations and restrictions upon the nature of the work and not upon the sex of the worker?  
(c) For equal treatment of men and women in all schemes for the revival of agriculture?  
(d) The application to men and women equally of any schemes for the training and relief of the unemployed?
- 4.—THE RIGHT OF MARRIED WOMEN.  
(a) To retain or change their nationality?  
(b) To engage in paid work?  
(c) To be separately assessed and taxed?
- 5.—WOMEN POLICE.  
Legislation to make it compulsory on Watch Committees and Standing Joint Committees to appoint a sufficient number of qualified women police?
- 6.—BIRTH CONTROL.  
A policy of the Minister of Health in not allowing information on artificial Birth Control to be given at Centres and Clinics, maintained out of public funds to which people of all opinions are required to contribute?
- 7.—EDUCATION.  
Fair and adequate financial treatment for Catholic elementary and secondary schools?

## Mass at St. Patrick's, Soho.

Following our custom at former elections, we have asked for Mass to be offered on polling day, to beg Divine guidance on the electors. Mass at St. Patrick's, Soho, will be offered for this intention on Tuesday, October 27th, at 8 o'clock.

## Burmese Round Table Conference.

*The Week* (Bombay), gives a report of the Women's Conference held at Rangoon on August 23rd. It was, says the *Week*, the first Conference convened by Burmese women, quite independent of any men's Conference or political party. The Conference passed a resolution urging the authorities concerned to send at least two Burmese women as members of the Round Table Conference for Burma. This request has been refused. We heartily join with the women of Burma in protesting against this omission. St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance has written to the Secretary of State for India, protesting against the exclusion of Burmese and British women from the Burmese Round Table Conference; and trust that the omission will be remedied before the meeting of the Conference.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## National Union of Women Teachers.

To the Editor, the CATHOLIC CITIZEN,

Dear Madam,

The Government announcement acknowledges, at last, the justification of the teachers' opposition to the ill-considered proposal to reduce, by a further 15 per cent., salaries which, since 1920, have already suffered three heavy reductions.

The National Union of Women Teachers cannot agree, however, that teachers' salaries are able to bear a 10 per cent. reduction if efficiency is to be maintained. Neither do we believe that retrenchment in education will help this country out of its difficulties, present or future, social or economic. Teachers, equally with all other citizens, will have to bear their share of the burden of taxation, but they are definitely opposed to a permanent reduction in salary to meet a temporary situation. Taxation can be revised when the emergency passes, but salaries once reduced have an unhappy knack of refusing to rise. The proposed curtailment of educational expenditure was declared necessary to help in saving the gold standard, but since this plea is no longer valid, we call upon the Government to withdraw the Education Section from the Economy Bill, and so prevent the slowing-down of the educational service of this country.

ETHEL E. FROUD (General Secretary).

(Correspondence continued on p. 81.)



## International Notes.

Mrs. Subbarayan, speaking at the Round Table Conference, begged that a clause should be inserted in the new Constitution providing that sex should be no bar to the rights of citizenship, but she believes in the reservation of seats for women. Mrs. Naidu, in an interview with the *Manchester Guardian*, said that women claimed full and equal rights of citizens, equal duty, opportunity and responsibility, and were not prepared to accept any discrimination in their favour. Indian women, she said, are already enfranchised on the same terms as men, but the basis is undemocratic, being a property one; women want adult suffrage as the only franchise worthy of a civilised country.

\* \* \* \*

The September number of *L'Action Féminine* (Luxemburg), opens with a long article on the desire of the women of the world for peace, and gives particulars of the petition to be presented by the women citizens of Luxemburg to the Geneva Disarmament Conference of 1932.

\* \* \* \*

The leading article of the same paper for July describes the net result of the Luxemburg elections in June last. The one woman representative who had previously sat in the Lower Parliament, was not re-elected. Three others who stood as candidates were not elected. The women of Luxemburg find themselves, therefore, without direct representation, although possessing the vote since 1919, as the men of every party, either openly oppose the demands of the feminist organisations, or after making fair promises, let them down. The article closes with a call to renewed and united effort.

\* \* \* \*

*Soziale Hilfe* (Austria) has a long article on success, or want of success, in training the mentally deficient. Dr. Margaret Ausion comments on the fact that in her experience (i.e., Austria) the best results are obtained by the religious orders in this work, because in the strict community life the qualities of absolute selflessness and personal sacrifice are brought to a higher degree of perfection than is common in the most scientifically equipped lay institution. It is precisely these qualities, quickly perceived by the pupils in tuition, which count ultimately in the direction of those backward and apparently uneducatable children.

We are glad to associate ourselves with the following resolution passed by the O.D.I.:

"The Open Door International is fully aware that the world to-day is passing through a serious economic crisis—a crisis which is not merely a phenomenon of the moment, but which amounts to another industrial revolution which is largely contributing to the present world-wide unemployment, and threatening the livelihood of many workers.

"Fully recognising the difficulty of finding a solution of these problems, the Open Door International declares that these national and international difficulties afford no reason for the postponement of the consideration of the economic position of the woman worker or for taking steps for improving her status as an earner. On the contrary, these difficulties afford the very reason for building the new economic system on equality and justice between men and women, on a system which provides that the regulation of the conditions of work should be based on the nature of the work and not on the sex of the worker."

\* \* \* \*

*The International Women's News* reports that Miss Enid Goulden Bach, a niece of the late Mrs. Pankhurst, has been commissioned to compile a text-book on the emancipation of women for the guidance of the youth of Germany. Connected with the suffrage movement from childhood, in 1928 Miss Bach was one of five girls who made an almost successful effort to get a letter to the King, petitioning for votes for women at 21. The letter reached the steps of the Palace before a capture was effected.

A. A. B.

## SPAIN.

As was to be expected, the Spanish Cortes has included in the Constitution an Article granting women the vote. It is calculated that this will add over 5,000,000 voters to the electorate. We are glad to note that the Catholic Party, including the priests, voted for this reform. Doña Clara Campoamor voted for, but we regret to see that Doña Victoria Kent voted against woman suffrage. It seems singular that having reached a high position herself, Doña Victoria Kent should distrust her sisters. Many women were to be seen "lobbying" deputies, and urging them not to sully the Constitution by establishing privileges, but to establish equal political rights. The vote is to be granted to women at 23.

## CORRESPONDENCE (Continued).

### Women's Freedom League.

(NON-PARTY).

2nd October, 1931.

To the Editor,  
CATHOLIC CITIZEN.

Dear Madam,

We shall be very grateful for any publicity you may kindly give to the following. Could you include these announcements in your list of events?

*Thursday, October 15th, 10-30 a.m. and 2-30 p.m.*—Conference of representatives of women's organisations at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on "Women and the I.L.O." Chairman: Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence.

*Thursday, November 12th, and Friday, November 13th, 3 p.m. to 9-30 p.m.*—"Universal Market" at Caxton Hall, Westminster. To be opened on November 12th by *Cicely Hamilton*, and on November 13th by *Lillah McCarthy, O.B.E.* Christmas presents, entertainments, refreshments, etc., etc.

Thanking you very cordially for any notice you may kindly give of above,

FLORENCE A. UNDERWOOD.

N.B.—St. Joan's S.P.A. has a stall at this Universal Market (see Treasurer's Note).

## LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH.

Hon. Sec., Miss N. S. Parnell, B.A.,

45 Falkner Street, Liverpool.

A very pleasant re-union after the holidays was held on September 15th. Our speaker was Miss Hardwick, Organising Secretary to the Diocesan Board of Moral Welfare, who gave us a most interesting address on "Developments in Moral Welfare at Home and Abroad."

The Branch is represented on the Merseyside Disarmament Council by the Hon. Secretary, and is to co-operate with the women's societies on that body in organising a demonstration in the small Picton Hall.

If it can be arranged, we are to have the pleasure of an address from Miss Alice Curtayne on the subject of her recent brilliant book, *St. Catherine of Siena*.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS.

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Tynan, Miss .. .. .	4	6	0
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## TREASURER'S NOTE.

The usual Christmas Sale at Caxton Hall organised by the Woman's Freedom League will take place on Thursday and Friday, November 12th and 13th. May I appeal for gifts for St. Joan's Stall and also for volunteers to help sell, as well as purchasers. Both gifts and offers of help should be sent to the office as soon as possible. For the convenience of members a private Sale will be held at the Office, 55 Berners Street, on Wednesday, November 11th, from 1-30 to 6-30. Tea may also be had.

There will also be another Jumble Sale soon, but the date is not yet fixed. We shall gladly welcome any articles, which may be sent from now onwards to Mrs. Hand, 10 St. James' Terrace, N.W.8.

P. M. BRANDT.

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Organ—"The Catholic Citizen," 2d. monthly.

**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.

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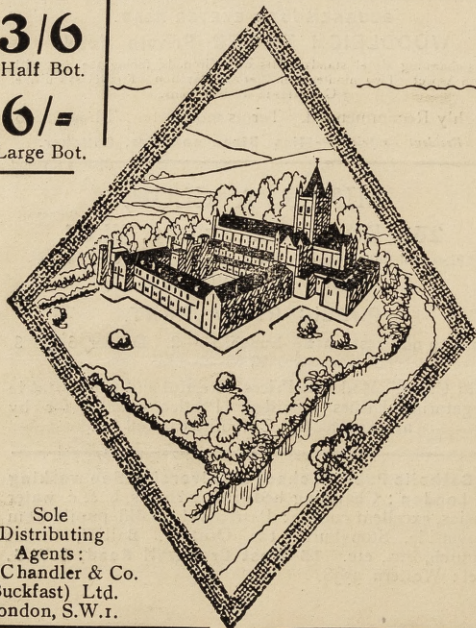
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