

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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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.

Report of the Royal Commission on the Civil Service.

By E. M. WHITE, Editor of "Opportunity."

(the organ of the Fedn. of Women Civil Servants).

It is but natural, perhaps, time being limited and the subject largely unfamiliar to the ordinary journalist, that the Press has, in some instances, given rather misleading summaries of the recently issued Report of the Royal Commission on the Civil Service.

I will not attempt here to deal with the Report as a whole, but merely with those portions of it which especially concern the women in the Service. To them it is at once a sham, an incubus and a great disappointment. Its one bright feature is a greatly improved *tone* in regard to women and their work.

There were three main grievances laid before the Commission in several really able Memoranda, supplemented by oral evidence from representatives of the women Civil Servants themselves: unfair restriction of opportunity, inequality of pay and compulsory resignation on marriage. Not one of these has been adequately met by the recommendations of the Commissioners: indeed, the question of pay has not been met at all, and the marriage bar has been made more stringent.

In no case is it recommended that women should be admitted to those posts from which they are now statutorily barred. Their exclusion from the Indian C.S. is not even mentioned! The question of their admission to the Diplomatic and Consular Services is held to raise "issues of high policy" which can only be determined by the Government. Well, well—one must recognize that the whole position of Civil Servants raises questions of policy at

some level or other—some of it rather low-down policy too—and in the last resort of course it is the Government which decides what, if any, of the recommendations of a Royal Commission it will adopt; but courageous and efficient Commissioners usually feel it to be their part at least to make recommendations of a specific kind. Not so Lord Tomlin and his colleagues: their recommendation on this point is that the Government "should again examine the position at an early date."

As to the "alleged existence of prejudice" against women, and its operation against their being accorded full opportunities for responsible work and fair promotion, the recommendation is that "it may be desirable to proceed cautiously at the outset." Was "the outset" 50 years ago, when educated women were first employed in the Post Office, or 11 years ago, when general Service posts were opened to them?

Then consider the marriage bar. It is a most bitter disappointment that the Commission had not enough of the progressive mind to recognize that the time was overdue for eliminating such inquisition into women's private lives, and to recommend definitely the removal of this sex disqualification altogether, taking opportunity to undo, so far as their Report could, the disastrous proviso in the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act, which permitted the exclusion of the Civil Service from its operation. But, in fact, this Report has actually worsened the position. At present, under the Regulation of

August 6th, 1921, exception to the rule of retirement on marriage may be made if "it is in the interests of the public service" that it should be made, and this could be interpreted to cover the retention of any thoroughly efficient women in the Service. True, it never was so interpreted or exercised at all until the solitary case of Dr. Sybil Overton last March, but the way was open for such interpretation. The Report, however, under pretext of converting the present nominal discretionary power into a real one, recommends that such power shall be narrowed down to cover the retention or appointment of a married woman only where it "is advisable in the light of her special qualifications or special experience in relation to the duties required of her." It has been aptly pointed out by an experienced woman Civil Servant that "in a Service where one of the tests of good organization is that every officer shall be easily replaceable without dislocation of public work this new wording completely cuts out officers in the graded posts from the benefits of the proviso and practically limits its application to members of the professional or specialist class."

"Certain members" of the Commission (we know not who or how many they were) strongly opposed retention of the marriage bar, the Report informs us. Would that they had had the pertinacity of their convictions and had signed a Minority Report on sound lines!

And equal pay? Here again we are told of disagreement among the Commissioners. They were "divided almost equally." On which side was the balance? In any case, the Commission as a whole has evaded decision, and the views of the Pros and of the Antis are set forth with the contradictory recommendations of each group appended!

There is, however, some comfort to be extracted from this section of the Report, for the views of the Antis are nakedly of the "Can't afford" type, and have no relation to the justice and soundness of the women's claim. Indeed, their one excursion into the sphere of ethics was scarcely a happy one, their idea of "common fairness" being apparently the inequality of payment for equality of work which obtains in some employment outside the Service.

It has been called a "Status quo Report." With a Service bristling with anomalies and grievances, that is in itself a condemnation. Before the appointment of the Royal Commission the service women had hoped great things from a thorough examination of their case by

an impartial and efficient body. Royal Commissions are not appointed every day: it will be a very long time before another considers the affairs of the Civil Service. Meanwhile, this "As you were!" Report will be a definite stumbling-block in the path of those pressing for reforms: there will be a general idea that grievances have been considered and found insubstantial. The women, alas! to their cost, know better.

DINNER TO MISS McENTEE, Ph.D.

On Thursday, July 16th, St. Joan's S.P.A. gave a most successful dinner at Pinoli's Restaurant in honour of Miss McEntee, Ph.D., Instructor in History, Hunter College of the City of New York, and an ardent member of St. Joan's Alliance.

Miss Douglas Irvine, who presided, voiced the welcome which St. Joan's Alliance always extends to overseas members.

Referring to the article on Women in "The Catholic Encyclopedia," which Miss McEntee is taking an active part in endeavouring to have amended, Miss Eleanor FitzGerald remarked, amid laughter and applause, that the only excuse for the writer of the article and those who held similar views was "invincible ignorance."

Miss McEntee gave a most interesting account of the general position of women in the United States, and regretted that there was no American equivalent to St. Joan's Alliance. In speaking of the women of the Southern States, she referred to the fact that they had recently pronounced against the barbaric practice of lynching, which some men upheld under the guise of its being a protection to women. With reference to "The Catholic Encyclopedia," Miss McEntee said that she was still pursuing the matter, and hoped that all who were able would give assistance.

At the close of the dinner Miss Fedden moved a vote of thanks to the Chairman and Speakers.

Since we last went to press, Miss Picton-Turbervill's Bill to prevent the death sentence being passed in future on expectant mothers, has become Law. The Bill passed its second reading in the House of Commons without debate. We congratulate Miss Picton-Turbervill on her success. It was fitting that such a Bill should be presented by a woman.

Notes and Comments.

The incidents and crisis which led up to the appointment of a National Government are so intersected with party politics that a non-party paper cannot deal with the question. Nor is it the province of the "Catholic Citizen" to do so. The crisis affects all the people of Great Britain, and we may well pray that the Guardian Saints of our country may bring her through these perilous days.

It is significant of the changed position of women that the Assembly of the League is to deal with a Report on the Nationality of Married Women, drawn up by an International Committee of Women created by the Council of the League of Nations in January of this year. With the report and its reception by the Assembly we will deal in a later issue of the "Catholic Citizen." Meanwhile St. Joan's S.P.A. has written to the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary asking that the British Delegation may be instructed to take the lead in the Assembly, and urge the States Members to give effect to the recommendations of the Women's Consultative Committee, and that steps be taken to conclude a new International Convention based on the principle of equality for men and women in Nationality Laws.

The Prime Minister has declared the Labour Party to be in favour of this principle; the House of Commons has twice expressed itself in favour of equality in Nationality, and the British Delegation made a similar declaration at the Codification Conference at the Hague.

It seems, therefore, fitting that the British Delegation to the Assembly should take the lead on this question. We rejoice that such trusted friends as Lord Lytton, Lord Cecil, Lord Astor and Dame Edith Lytton, are among the representatives of Great Britain, but we regret to lose a woman as full delegate.

It was announced in a recent number of the "Woman's Leader" that The Millicent Garrett Fawcett Memorial Committee, composed of representatives of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship and the London and National Society for Women's Service, are negotiating with the Dean of Westminster Abbey regarding an extension of the monument to Henry Fawcett in the Abbey, so

as to make it a monument to Dame Fawcett also. We hope that the negotiation will succeed.

As a result of Commandant Mary Allen's visit, President Terra (Uruguay) has issued a decree for the formation of a corps of women police in Montevideo. Two members of the Women's Auxiliary Service, England, have been appointed as women police in Cairo. As the "Policewoman's Review" says, these appointments are all the more gratifying as they follow directly on the extension of the contracts of women police in Alexandria, and therefore prove that the experiment inaugurated by the authorities in 1930 has been successful.

Thus the movement for the establishment of women police extends from one country to another.

We offer our cordial congratulations to our member, Mrs. Laughton Mathews and Mr. Mathews on the birth of a son. We feel that we can claim David Jeffery as a future supporter of St. Joan's S.P.A.

We thank Mrs. White for her lucid explanation of the Civil Service Report as it affects women. St. Joan's S.P.A. endorses Mrs. White's criticism. We are disappointed and indignant that women Civil Servants cannot obtain fair treatment.

Many people are disturbed because the calling of domestic servants seems to have become unpopular. Two attempts were made recently to establish domestic service on a better footing. Mr. Geoffrey Mander, Liberal M.P. for Wolverhampton, brought in a Bill in June, which proposed to set up a Commission of five, three of whom, including the chairman, were to be women, to improve the conditions of domestic servants, and to consider whether such service could be brought under the Unemployment Insurance Act. The National Conference of Labour Women, which met at Blackpool in June, also adopted a Charter for the improvement of domestic service, upon which the comfort of many homes depend.

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE,

AND

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

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The Suffragette Movement.*

The Militant Suffrage Campaign, unique in history, is likely to find many historians. Miss Sylvia Pankhurst's book, "The Suffragette Movement," concentrates, as far as the fight for the vote is concerned, more especially on the campaign in the East End, of which she was the Leader and Initiator. This is a side of the movement less well known than any other. The Women's Social and Political Union gathered to itself women of every age, class, creed, profession or industry; the titled woman and the mill hand; but Sylvia Pankhurst established herself in the East End, made herself one with the people, and founded the East London Federation of the Suffragettes. She did not see eye to eye with Mrs. Pankhurst and Christabel, nor did they view with favour her East End campaign. Sylvia did not take kindly to autocracy, however necessary it might be in the guerilla warfare waged by women against the Government; nor did she favour actual violence, but rather the earlier methods, when in the great demonstrations leading to the arrest of many women, militancy as such was left to the harassed police.

If Miss Pankhurst's history is one-sided, it is perhaps as well that it should be so. In later times her account taken in conjunction with other histories of the women's movement will make it easier for posterity to obtain a clearer insight into the long drawn-out fight, on many fronts, dating from the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Posterity will read with horror and amazement of the terrible things done to women political prisoners. Miss Pankhurst gives a vivid account of forcible feeding, of which she was one of the victims; of the Cat and Mouse Act, under which hunger strikers were released

at death's door, and re-arrested later to recommence their defiance of prison bars. It is a sickening and haunting tale, which covers the Parliament of those days with shame, and its victims with lasting glory.

But it is not all sad reading: there are many thrilling incidents of escapes, of great demonstrations, of processions converging on Downing Street, with the determination of an angry mob—East and West met, and were united in calling on a *Liberal* Government to listen to the voice of the people.

The first part of the book deals with the Pankhurst family; the early married life of Doctor and Mrs. Pankhurst, in which we get glimpses of an England that has passed away. It is interesting not only on this account, but because it is always of psychological interest to follow the results of early training in the lives of those who have helped to change the course of history.

Miss Pankhurst admits that the important part played by women during the war in all branches of social service had proved a tremendous argument for their enfranchisement, but she says, with much truth, that "the memory of the old militancy, and the certainty of its recurrence if the claims of women were set aside, was a much stronger factor in overcoming the reluctance of those who would again have postponed the settlement."

We could wish that the young women of to-day, enjoying the freedom and the opportunities won at the price of so much suffering, would study Miss Pankhurst's book.

L. DE ALBERTI.

* By E. Sylvia Pankhurst. Longmans, Green & Co., 21s.

International Notes.

We are glad to see that our member, Mrs. de Fonseka, with Mrs. Gunasekera, acted as Polling Agents in the recent General Election in Ceylon. Women voters did not neglect to go to the poll to exercise their new right.

Mrs. de Fonseka has an article in the "Ceylon Independent" on the Women's Movement in Ceylon, tracing it back to the first time women took an interest in Social Service. It was under the auspices of the Catholic Church that the "Ladies of Charity" set to work in 1905 in Colombo, and brought sunshine into many homes in the slums irrespective of the tenants' creed.

Since then many Women's Societies for social service have been formed. Later on there sprung up a Woman's Franchise Union, which has seen its hopes realised in the recent election, when women of Ceylon voted on equal terms with men. Ceylon is the first country in the East to enjoy adult suffrage.

We learn from the "Woman's Leader" that a petition signed by 428 persons in Malta has been presented to the Royal Commission, asking for the recognition of the right of women to sit in either House of Parliament and to vote at the elections if they are 25 years of age or over and possess the requisite property qualification, such property being either the woman's or her husband's.

Mrs. John Morrell and Miss Rees of the Bermuda Woman Suffrage Society, were recently guests of honour at a dinner at the Minerva Club, under the auspices of the Women's Freedom League, with Dr. Knight in the chair. It will be remembered that the Assembly of Bermuda refused some months ago to adopt the recommendation of Lord Passfield, Secretary of State for the Colonies, that Bermuda should come into line with the rest of the British Empire, and enfranchise its women. Women have not accepted tamely this refusal of the Assembly. Mrs. Morrell, Vice-President of the Bermuda Woman Suffrage Society, has been sent to England to make representations to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Mrs. Morrell has shown her spirit by refusing to pay taxes, and her furniture was distrained. Miss Butler-Bowdon represented St. Joan's S.P.A. at the dinner. Enfranchised women in England, and in all parts of the Empire, are watching with eager sympathy the struggle in Bermuda.

"The International Women's News," August, reports that women have been enfranchised in Portugal. This good news has been circulated once or twice before, but on this occasion it seems to be true. The franchise for women is to be based on an educational qualification, but no doubt equal franchise will follow on. We heartily congratulate Portuguese women. Portugal is the first Latin country in Europe to pass a Woman's Enfranchisement Bill.

"Le Féminisme Chrétien," Brussels, gives a report in the June issue of an address delivered in Brussels, and other towns in Belgium, by Mlle. del Valle, dealing with the work accomplished by young women and girls during the Mexican persecution in carrying the consolations of religion to places to which priests were unable to penetrate. The Holy Father had granted to women, less open to suspicion than men, the privilege of carrying the Blessed Sacrament, giving Communion to the sick, and to themselves. On one occasion a volunteer was called for to go to a distant diocese, where no priest had penetrated for six months. A young girl of nineteen volunteered, and set out carrying 300 consecrated Hosts on her person. She accomplished her mission successfully, but suspicion fell on her later. In spite of torture and threats she never revealed the names of any to whom she had administered Communion. There were many heroines in Mexico at that time. Mlle. del Valle was herself in Mexico organising groups to help in keeping the Faith alive.

A. A. B.

THE OPEN DOOR INTERNATIONAL.

The Second Conference of the Open Door International for the Economic Emancipation of the Woman Worker was held in Stockholm from August 17th—21st.

The President, Chrystal Macmillan, welcomed the seventy delegates from the eight countries represented, and letters of regret for non-attendance were received from Greece, Uruguay, Palestine, Hungary, France and Italy. Large audiences listened with great interest to the presidential address, and again at the Public Meeting, when representative women from Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Great Britain and Sweden spoke on the questions of the Prohibition of Night Work for women only, the Married Woman's Right to paid work, Equal Pay for Equal Work, the

(Continued on p. 73.)

The Constance Peace Congress.

For the second time Marc Sangnier's Action Internationale Democratique pour la Paix has held its annual Congress in Germany—again at a time when political conditions seemed highly unpropitious. And the Congress of Constance, like that of Freiburg, has been a shining success.

The city of Constance, of which the Mayor, Herr Arnold, and more than one of the City Councillors were among the Congressists, gave us the warmest reception, and a memorable day was spent in visits to two other municipalities on the shores of the lake. First to Meersburg, a charming old town, rising steeply from the waterside, its red roofs climbing in stairs one above the other, half hidden by pear-trees, and where, in the ancient, pannelled audience hall of the Rathaus the Mayor and Mayoress received us, and golden wine from the municipal cellars was handed round by young women in local costume—petticoats of shot silk, silken shawls, and filligree coifs. Then down the lake to Ueberlingen, famous for its cactuses and roses, where an equally cordial reception awaited us. A woman of the town edged up to some of the French Congressists, telling them: "You should come oftener. You would see then we are not a wicked people. It is all a misunderstanding." While a young man who had worked in Manchester told eagerly how the news of the Congress had converted the Mayor to a belief in Pacifism. Incidents these, that show the value of the movement.

Two Commissions sat, for the study of disarmament and the general problems of European union, and produced various resolutions, all of which were carried unanimously, in favour of total disarmament, compulsory arbitration, free trade, abolition of passports, a moratorium for all war debts for an indefinite period, and a programme of positive international co-operation inspired by the principle that Europe must "unite or perish."

The final meeting took place in the old Consilium of Constance—that great hall with carved pillars and painted walls where five hundred years ago the Council met to end the schism of the Church. Amid the enthusiasm of an audience numbering over two thousand, Professor Quidde, the famous pacifist and winner of the Nobel prize for peace, spoke of the errors made by both German and French Governments in the past, and of his hopes for the future; a Spanish priest, Don Aguilar

Jimenez brought the consensus of the young Catholic democrats of Spain; Miss Pye, in the name of the Women's League for Peace and Freedom, told of the women's disarmament petition and the work women in England were doing for peace; and myself, charged with a double representation—for I had been asked to represent the secretariat of the Italian Popular Party—brought greetings from the Catholic Democrats of Italy and also from St. Joan's Alliance. Finally, in an atmosphere of rapt enthusiasm, Marc Sangnier delivered a speech that even that great orator has never surpassed, a burning plea for peace, not as a negative thing, but born on co-operation and understanding, born of no disdain for national traditions, but cherishing and bringing these to the service of all mankind.

The chairman, the German pacifist, Dr. Venedey, had mentioned his joy in seeing Catholic organisations playing so large a part in the Congress, and the next day, Sunday, August 9th, High Mass was celebrated in the Cathedral for the Congress, and a Franciscan preached a sermon, in which he underlined its spiritual significance and emphasised the duty of all Christians to work for peace.

BARBARA BARCLAY CARTER.

REVIEW.

The Story of Pope Pius XI. By the Revd. Benedict Williamson. (Alexander Ouseley Ltd., 5s. net.)

This sketch of the Holy Father's life is intended to reach the ordinary public. The Pontificate of Pius XI has been an eventful one; he ascended the Papal throne when Europe was still exhausted from the years of war, as indeed it still is; and has suffered the grief of witnessing the Church of Christ persecuted in different lands, and the lives of the faithful imperilled. *Fides Intrepida* is the motto which according to the prophecies of Malachy, belongs to the present Pope, and it is with fearless faith that the Holy Father has guided the Bark of Peter.

To the outside world one of the most striking events of the reign of Pope Pius XI is the signing of the Lateran Treaty, which healed the breach between the Vatican and Italy, a breach which had lasted nearly sixty years.

The author, urging his readers to face the future as does the Holy Father with dauntless faith, concludes with the Pope's own words:

"What of to-morrow? We do not know! But we do know the future is in the hands of God, and therefore in good hands! Whatsoever the future brings comes to us by the disposition of, or by the permission of, Divine Providence, so we declare that, be the signs of this Divine Providence what they may, we shall always faithfully follow in whatsoever direction we may be led."

L. de A.

The Open-Door International.—(Contd.)

Pregnant Woman, the Dangerous Influences of the International Labour Organisation, "The Women Themselves" and the Economic Situation as it affects women.

The Conference passed resolutions on these subjects and also others dealing with the attack on women's work in agriculture, which in most European countries embraces all forms of dairying.

On the question of separate trade unions for women, the conference declared that women will only be helped by joining trade unions which demand for them equal entry, apprenticeship, opportunity, conditions and pay. A convention was adopted unanimously for presentation to the International Labour Organisation, demanding that the principle of equal pay should be put into effect, as claimed in the Versailles Treaty, and the Board authorised to draft a Questionnaire suitable for the International Labour Office to send out in connection with the Convention.

Admirable arrangements had been made for the Conference, and for many enjoyable social functions by the Municipality and the members of the Swedish Open Door Group.

The visitors were welcomed to the world famous Town Hall by Fru Ruth Gustavsson on behalf of the Town Council.

The Swedish Minister of Health and Mr. Lindhagen, a former Mayor of Stockholm, and an eminent Leader of the Socialist party, were present at some of the sessions.

Reports were received on the national work done to promote the object of the Open Door, three national branches, seven new organisations were admitted, and the following Board was elected: Chrystal Macmillan, Great Britain; Ruth Vander Litt, U.S.A., America; Winifred Le Sueur, Great Britain; Elizabeth Abbott, Great Britain; Gertrude Baer, Germany; Louise H. de Craene van Duuren, Belgium; Thrya von Beetzen-Oestman, Finland; Anna Westergaard, Denmark; Frantiska Plaminkova, Czechoslovakia; Ingeborg Wallin, Sweden.

TREASURER'S NOTE.

We are very glad to be able to report that the Jumble Sale on July 18th was a great success owing to the wonderful co-operation of members and friends. We realised the sum of £9 17s. 2d. Our grateful thanks are due to those who sent donations in cash, and also to the following who sent goods for the Sale: Misses Barry, Brady, Brandt, Butler Bowdon, Barclay Carter, Mrs. Dixon Davies, Misses E. and K. FitzGerald, Gadsby, Mrs. Bradley Greene, Mr. and Mrs. Hand, Misses Haslam, Hugh, Hynes and Jeffery, Mrs. Laughton Mathews, Misses Musson, Parnell, Dr. Shattock, Mrs. Shorto, Miss Verner and Mrs. Ward.

P. M. BRANDT.

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JAPAN.

"The International Women's News," September, gives the reply received from Japan to the questionnaire circulated by the Suffrage Sub-Committee of the Committee for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship. Japanese women have neither the parliamentary nor municipal vote; they are at present prohibited from joining any political party; but such public bodies as the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Chamber of Agriculture, are open to women, and to the latter they may be elected.

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