

# THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN

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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.

## The Family

By Christine Spender

This year the central purpose of the British National Conference on Social Work\* was to study the family as an evolving social institution in our time. In the rather pompous language of the foreword to the Report "an effort was made to determine new ways in which the State, the Church and voluntary societies, in a common partnership of thought and action, might play an effective part in strengthening the family as a basic social institution in the life of a free and democratic society."

I shall only attempt to make a few remarks on things which struck me in the account of addresses and discussions. To be perfectly frank one should have been there to have gauged correctly the climate of the Conference. What struck me as completely outstanding in the basic assumptions was the assumption that the family now consists of mother, father and one or at the most two children. Nowhere did one find any loophole in which the larger family was seriously considered, except as being a potential of the well-known "problem" family. Without going into arguments for or against I found this pre-conception rather depressing.

In his stimulating opening address Professor Titmuss pointed out: "There are, we are told, no problem children, only problem parents." He talked about the way the parents' confidence in themselves might be undermined by too much official intervention in the name of various policies and theories. In the United States it had been said that the machine age is "subtly imposing on parents the ideal of a mechanically trained, faultlessly functioning, and always clean, punctual and deodorized body." In considering the employment of married women Professor Titmuss drew attention to the fact that most mothers have largely finished with the business of child care by the time they reach their forties. The mother can expect to live another thirty-five years and what shall she do with this part of her life?

"Should she continue to cling to her role as a mother, over-possessive, frustrated, dissatisfied? Or should she

\*The Family. Report of The British National Conference on Social Work at Bedford College for Women, 15th-18th April 1953. (National Council of Social Service (Inc.) 3s. 6d.)

accept the need for adjustment and seek other interests? If she does, what has society to offer in the form of constructive, satisfying work which might make use of her accumulated experience as a mother and home-maker?"

The unthinking and unknowing, said the Professor, may condemn in moralising terms the mother seeking work outside the home for few subjects are more surrounded with emotional prejudice and moral platitude. He examined the present employment position of married women and concluded that, "a Government which pursues a policy of closing nursery schools and day nurseries, is, to say the least, being unintelligent about the present realities of family living."

One other stimulating remark of the Professor's should be recorded. "Divorce is not a cause of family breakdown; it is a symptom."

Dr. John Bowlby who is Director of the Child Guidance Clinic, Tavistock Square, made one very interesting point. "In all our social and medical provision for children I think that the enjoyment factor has been neglected. No mother is going to be a good mother unless she enjoys her child." He dwelt on the extraordinary attitudes of the official adoption societies as though "adoption agencies seem to exist to prevent children from being adopted!" And he recorded satisfaction that for children who are in hospital, daily visiting is now recommended by the Ministry of Health.

Mrs. Kathleen Bliss spoke from a specifically Christian viewpoint. Considering the "conception of marriage as a freely entered and *freely maintained* personal relation worked out between the individuals concerned", she asked whether this conception was better than former ones? Better for whom, and why? When certain roles and certain rules were assumed for the marriage relationship perhaps after all it was an easier relationship to maintain. She pointed out that unfortunately to-day this older form of marriage persists only in a degraded state—for example the husband mainly asserts leadership by denying his wife all knowledge of what he is earning and spending. The partnership type of marriage gives high rewards but the risk of failure is higher, said Mrs. Bliss. Mrs. Bliss pointed out that we tend to think of wives going out to work



as something new but that "it is common, indeed universal, and always has been that all wives except the wives of the wealthy should have a place as producers in society."

"To keep women out of economic production is not just a state of nature; it implies the capital resources to do so. If we want to keep married women out of industry, then something else will have to go. I believe our divided state of mind about whether there should be married women in industry or the professions prevents us throwing in the energy needed to make conditions of work better than they often are."

Mr. Gordon B. Bessey, considering children emphasised the decline of the family as a clan into husband-wife-children in the small house "... grandparents and maiden aunts are out of fashion in the family circle." He said:—

"A northern University Settlement group reports that 'The husband and father does not accept it as part of his duty to supervise the children's leisure or to plan for their future careers.' In another area father is kept in the background and often brought in as a last resort in disciplinary matters. Is the father after his good start in the early years taking any real part in making decisions about his children's education and employment?"

The Family and Work were considered by Sir Geoffrey Vickers and Miss N. Wynne, a Director of Carr & Co., Carlisle. Both speakers said that there was nothing to prevent the two great social centres—family and the working group—co-operating and enriching each other. Miss Wynne declared that "wage-earning by mothers with young children constitutes the gravest impact of work on the family life." But:

"A wife's earnings adds appreciably to the family finances; holiday dates are often planned taking the wife's work arrangements into account; husbands and sons now help with chores at home. In short, a different working partnership is slowly being evolved."

Under the Chairmanship of Sir George Laidlaw a variety of speakers undertook to summarise the report on discussion groups. There is not space to enlarge on these summaries. Suffice it to say that considerations seem mainly to have involved the day-to-day contacts of social work in connection with families, leading their ordinary or not-so-ordinary lives, and the conclusions drawn from these contacts. None of these conclusions were startlingly original but one is worth bearing continuously in mind—i.e. that the social worker should not try to impose preconceived ideas on others. She (or he) "needs to be very humble in the face of the age-old institution of the family."

One evening's session was devoted to an International Meeting when there were descriptions of social service in France, Belgium, India and Sierra Leone. Mr. J. T. R. Macauley speaking for Sierra Leone said: "Women now no longer took a back seat but tried to hold their own in all fields with their men-folk."

The final address was made by the Bishop of St. Albans (E. M. Gresford Jones) and a fine inspiring address it was.

He said that Dr. Langmead Casserly made the point that modern post-Christian man does not reject Christianity intellectually. He rejects it because it plays no part in his inherited culture pattern.

"The Church in this century has not the comparatively easy task of rebutting anti-Christian arguments, but the much more difficult one of reversing prevailing social trends. . . . Most people think that married life depends on two pillars man and wife—but it depends on three pillars and the third pillar is God."

#### On Reforme Le Code Civil

Pour la première fois en Belgique il est un domaine—assez restreint il est vrai—où la mère va exercer comme le père l'autorité familiale.

Jusqu'ici pendant le mariage le père exerçait seul la puissance paternelle, et si le code parlait du consentement de la mère au mariage de son enfant, c'était pour ajouter qu'en cas de dissentiment entre les parents, le consentement du père suffisait à autoriser le mariage.

Depuis la loi du 14 Juillet 1953 il n'en est plus ainsi. *Les deux parents sont mis maintenant sur un pied d'égalité.* Le fils ou la fille de moins de 21 ans qui veut se marier doit avoir le consentement de son père *et de sa mère.* En cas de litige le tribunal statuera en s'inspirant de l'intérêt de l'enfant. On ne verra donc plus dans les ménages désunis, le père autoriser un adolescent, qu'il connaît à peine, à contracter un sot mariage ne fut-ce que pour ennuyer sa femme, alors que la mère qui a été seule à élever l'enfant ne peut faire entendre sa voix.

A défaut de parents ce sont les grands parents qui ont à donner leur avis. Ici aussi l'égalité règne désormais. L'avis de l'aïeul ne l'emporte plus sur celui de l'aïeule. Le dissentiment entre les grands-parents emporte consentement.

Entre 21 et 25 ans les enfants devront encore solliciter le conseil de leurs parents avant de se marier. Endéans les 15 jours de cet acte formel et respectueux, *la mère comme le père* pourra désormais demander au juge de faire surseoir à ce mariage.

Après 25 ans le consentement des parents ne devra plus être sollicité. Ceci supprime un anachronisme qui paraissait quelque peu ridicule quand il s'agissait d'un sexagénaire qui se remariait pour la troisième fois. La Belgique était d'ailleurs le dernier pays d'Europe avec le Luxembourg à conserver dans son droit cette survivance d'un autre âge.

C'est une femme députée, *Madame de Riemaeker* qui est l'auteur de la proposition de loi qui vient d'être votée par les Chambres. Elle s'est attelée avec persévérance, pendant plusieurs années, à faire triompher cette réforme qui révolutionne notre Code Civil. Pour la première fois l'autorité familiale n'est plus limitée, rivée à la personne du père. Les mères voient enfin élargir leurs droits afin de permettre une meilleure sauvegarde de l'enfant. **F. Baetens**

## Notes and Comments

Possibly readers may notice a slight change in our content this month. For this issue and for the next few issues of *The Catholic Citizen*, we intend to omit "Twenty-Five Years Ago" and to publish instead reprinted matter from the "History of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society" (now St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance) written by Leonora de Alberti for our paper twenty-five years ago. The first instalment will be found on page 77. Many readers are now quite ignorant of our origins and would probably be most interested to learn of them. Many others have actually asked us to publish something of the sort. It is interesting to note, as we start this venture, that our roots can be traced back to one morning in December—the Feast of the Immaculate Conception in 1910. But read on for yourselves and see!

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We draw the attention of our readers to the advertisement of the Mass Meeting on Equal Pay at the Central Hall, Westminster on December 9th, 7 p.m. We rely on the support of our members.

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The National Union of Women Teachers has issued a Memorandum on the Burnham Committee's Recommendations on Teachers' Salaries for Primary and Secondary Schools (1953), for the consideration of the Minister of Education, Members of Parliament, and Members of Local Education Authorities.

It denounces the new regulations as "maintaining, and in some cases extending," the injustices of the present schemes. The fundamental injustice of calculating the basic scale of salaries for qualified women teachers as a percentage of the basic scale for men teachers is continued. The woman is left in the position of losing some £4,700 during a teaching life of forty years, and £72 10s. 0d. a year in pension based on the same length of service.

The National Union of Women Teachers points out that a woman Head Teacher may receive less than the men on her staff, and that a woman's first class degree (the reward of her scholarship) is rated as worth only £72 as against £90 for a man's.

\* \* \*

On October 25th, under the National Insurance Bill (1953) new and improved maternity benefits came into force. These benefits include a maternity grant of £9 for each baby born, and if a mother is confined at home or anywhere other than in accommodation provided under the National Health Service, £3 home confinement grant. Women in employment will now receive a maternity grant of £9 or £12 and 32s. 6d. a week for eighteen weeks.

The First Report of the National Advisory Committee on the Employment of Older Men and Women (Cmd. 8963, H.M.S.O. 2s.) has just appeared. It is a thoughtful and thorough enquiry which, broadly speaking, recommends the retention or re-employment of older workers and the delaying of the present usual retiring age for men and women. There is a section devoted to "Some Difficulties Specially Affecting Women" in which the question of married women who wish to return to employment in later life is considered. There is no doubt that a considerable wastage of talent and training, involving much heartbreak, goes with the unwillingness to employ the older woman. Says the Report: "The proportion of women in the higher age groups in paid work has always been small and there should be considerable scope for increasing it." Among the reasons listed for this state of affairs in "important spheres of women's employment" is one which is almost comic, so untrue is it—that is "the belief that shoppers prefer young women to serve them." How often have I heard sighs for the older shop assistant with her good humour and patience and her experience of life in general as well as in shops! Perhaps this fallacy is only one among many and with understanding and re-adjustment on both sides, employer and employed, the older worker will come into his (her) own. There are certain material difficulties concerning superannuation schemes and the recruitment, training and promotion of younger workers but these surely could be overcome with a little goodwill. Part-time employment in relation to age is to be considered in a later report.

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We ask the prayers of our readers for the repose of the soul of a staunch member of our Alliance, Betty Lowe. Members who were at our Rome Congress during the Holy Year will remember her.—R.I.P.

#### \* \* \*

#### St. Joan's Fair

November 28th is the Christmas Sale, and this year we are hoping for £200 as our exchequer is very low! As I said at the Annual General Meeting let us make this Coronation year a Thanksgiving year for all that has been achieved during the past one hundred years for women.

Do please send gifts in cash or in kind, as soon as possible to the office, and your name if you can help on the day. In any case be sure and come and bring your friends. Luncheons and teas will be provided at reasonable prices. The Sale is open from 12 noon to 5 p.m.

Don't forget the date and the place—**Saturday, November 28th**, St. Patrick's Clubroom, Scho Square. **Noreen K. Carr, Hon. Treasurer**



## ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE

AND  
Editorial Office of "The 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 Catholic Citizen."*

## The Obstacle Race of the Milk-White Lamb

This book\* by a barrister who was in the thick of the fight for the vote is, on the legal side, of the greatest value for its account of the legal restraints—past and present—on women's freedom to act as fully responsible human beings, and the successes so far achieved and the obstacles still to be overcome in the race towards the goal of full equality of status between men and women. It is factual enough to be of great service to those still running the race, and light enough to arouse the attention of the onlookers and the man-and-woman-in-the-street, whose support is necessary if reforms are to be achieved.

We are grateful to Mrs. Earengy particularly for her clear explanation of the present law of domicile, for this is little understood except by those who suffer under it. "A woman on marriage, according to English law, whatever her intention, loses her pre-marriage domicile and acquires that of her husband." Though the most obvious disadvantages of this situation arise in cases of divorce or legal separation, or suits for nullity, which have to be tried in the Courts of the husband's domicile, they are also apparent in cases concerning the validity of Wills and succession and distribution in intestacy. These, as regards movables, are governed by the law of the country which was the domicile of the deceased at the time of death. A wife may not know what her husband's domicile is: how can she ensure, for example, that her Will complies with the requirements of the law of his (i.e. her) domicile? She cannot calculate her assets or know how she may dispose of them.

The law of late has relieved wives in certain cases of the consequence of this anomaly but, as Mrs. Earengy says—"It is an anachronism that a wife should be saddled with the domicile of her husband who may make one change after another without her knowledge or approval."

\**A Milk-White Lamb. The Legal and Economic Status of Women.* By Florence Earengy, Barrister-at-Law. Foreword by the Hon. Mr. Justice Slade. (National Council of Women, 2s. 6d)

As to the Matrimonial Home, cases recently decided "indicate the evolutionary process which is bringing about change in the status of wives as such." The "generally accepted" belief that the husband has the legal right to choose the matrimonial home (unless shown to be spiteful and unreasonable) and that the wife's refusal to join him there renders her guilty of desertion, was countered in 1948 by one of the Lords Justices in a case brought to the Court of Appeal. He said "there is no proposition of law that a husband has the right to say where the matrimonial home should be. The decision where this home is to be is one affecting both parties and their children; and it is the duty of the parties to decide by agreement, each having an equal voice . . . it is a fallacy, though it is one of good sense, arising from the fact that the husband is usually the wage-earner and has to live near his work."

In Taxation the inequality of status between man and woman may result in financial hardship, borne by the man, as where he remains liable for Income Tax on the joint income even when the wife refuses to disclose her income to him, and he is unable to make the return.

Nothing is said, because there is nothing of a legal nature to say, on the worse case where the wife and mother has no income of her own, and the husband refuses to disclose to her what his income is, or to give her a fair share of it.

On the unjust Solicitation Laws Mrs. Earengy says: "It is a maxim of the administration of British Justice that an accused person is to be presumed innocent until proved guilty," and she points out that this principle is violated only in relation to the "common prostitute."

Mrs. Earengy, like all true feminists, champions the housewife, who plies a "trade which carries no pay or certain remuneration," and acknowledges that "the family unit, assailed as it has been by the demands of the modern state, is still the centre of a country's civilisation." She denies, however, that the preservation of the home needs to depend on the belief that "by

## History of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society

(Now St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance)

By Leonora de Alberti

marriage husband and wife become one person and the husband is that one." She quotes John Stuart Mill as saying nearly a hundred years ago: "the generality of the male sex cannot yet tolerate the idea of living with an equal;" perhaps they still preferred Keats' "Milk-White Lamb that bleats for man's protection."

I have stressed the value of the pamphlet on the legal side: the historical introduction is not so easy to praise, but generalisations are inevitable in so rapid a survey.

Phyllis C. Challoner

### A PIONEER

Miss Mary S. Allen, O.B.E., who has recently been received into the Church, was known as "The Pioneer Policewoman" and together with Miss Margaret Damer Dawson founded the Women Police Service in 1915, and succeeded as Commandant on the death of Miss Damer Dawson in 1920.

They trained and supplied women police for the County and Borough Forces, Parks, etc. also for the Ministry of Munitions. Policewomen were trained for the Army of Occupation forces in Cologne and for Egypt. Commandant Allen is the author of three books on Women Police and many articles, and founded and edited "The Policewoman's Review," for many years the organ of the Women Police Service. She also visited most of the countries of Europe by request, also the U.S.A., Brazil, and Uruguay, to speak and advise on the formation and training of Women Police.

F. M. Graham

"It is nothing short of cruel to direct all girls' ambitions to homemaking as the only valid aim of life by the way you educate them. If they remain single they must have other abilities developed for earning their living and it is no less important that they should have other interests and activities. Going back over the last fifty years try to think of them without all the work, paid or unpaid, of single women. You will find that in transforming nursing and education, in changing the whole status of women, in bettering the position of children, they have mainly supplied, not only the leaders, but the rank and file and the enthusiasm. They have addressed the meetings and they have addressed the envelopes . . . I hardly dare ask you to carry on your imaginings into the present time, and conceive that some demon's influence could suddenly obliterate all the single women with careers today. The City would fall into an awful disorder—better far eliminate the Directors than remove 'our Miss Smith' who knows all about everything. . . . The children in their tumult will wreck the school, the machines turn idly in the factories—No! Those who undervalue the unmarried woman must think again how much they depend upon her."—*The Single Woman* by Margery Fry (Delisle, 2s. 6d)

On the morning of December 8, 1910, Feast of the Immaculate Conception, two young Catholic girls, strangers to each other, stood outside Holloway Gaol waiting with other suffragists to welcome suffrage prisoners who were to be released that day. One of them mentioned the fact that she had been to Mass and was hailed by the other as a fellow Catholic. These two young girls, Gabrielle Jeffery and May Kendall, began then to discuss the suffrage position. At this period of the suffrage agitation various groups of women were forming special suffrage societies—apart from the two main bodies the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies and the Women's Social and Political Union—to appeal to various sections of the community: religious, industrial, professional. The Church League for Woman Suffrage and the Free Church League were already in being, and the idea came to those two girls to found a Catholic Suffrage Society to enable Catholics to contribute their share to the Suffrage movement. From that chance meeting the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society was born.

From an address in Finsbury Park our two pioneers issued an appeal to Catholic women interested in the Suffrage, and put an advertisement in the Catholic and Suffrage papers. Not long after, a question was asked at one the W.S.P.U. meetings at Queen's Hall—presumably by a friend of theirs—"Is there a Catholic Women's Suffrage Society?"—and Miss Christabel Pankhurst replied: "there is, see 'Votes for Women.'"

The first informal meeting of the budding society was held at Miss Smyth-Piggott's flat at which among those present were, Mrs. Alice Meynell, Miss Beatrice Gadsby, Miss Christine O'Connor, Miss K. FitzGerald, Mrs. and Miss Whately, and, of course, the two founders. Miss Kendall explained the idea that had come to Miss Jeffery and herself, and it was formally agreed to found the society.

The first formal meeting was held at Alan's Tea Rooms, Oxford Street, on the Feast of the Annunciation, March, 25, 1911. It was there decided that the Society should be non-party and constitutional, that it should be called The Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, and should have as Patron Blessed Joan of Arc, now St. Joan of Arc. The colours chosen were blue, white and gold; blue for Our Lady, white and gold as the Papal colours.

The object of the Society was: "To band together Catholics of both sexes, in order to secure for women the Parliamentary Vote, on the same terms as it is, or may be, granted to men." All Catholic women approving the object and methods were invited to join on paying a minimum annual subscription of 1s. Members were asked to say a daily "Hail Mary" and the invocation, "Blessed Joan of Arc pray for us."

Men were invited to join as associates, on the same conditions, with the exception that they were not permitted to elect, or eligible to be elected, to the Executive Committee.

Thus did the new society from its initiation explode a belief, then generally held, that Catholic women could not stand on their own feet. We may say here that all the founder members, with one exception, were "born" Catholics, they were also members of the W.S.P.U., with the exception of Miss Kathleen FitzGerald, a member of the National Union W.S.S.

(To be continued)



### THE MONTH IN PARLIAMENT

Parliament re-assembled on October 19th and was prorogued on Thursday 29th. The new session was opened in state by Her Majesty on Tuesday 3rd November. Miss Edith Pitt, one of the new women members made her maiden speech in answer to the Queen's speech.

During these ten days very few of our own special topics were discussed. The main debates were on the crisis in British Guiana, on Foreign Affairs generally, European Affairs and the Council of Europe in particular, the Fuel industry and British Airways.

On October 21st Mr. Braine raised on the Adjournment the question of the serious shortage of science teachers in our schools. He said: "A letter in The Times Educational Supplement of October 9th from the head of the Department of Education of Liverpool University . . . revealed that of the students entering the Department this term for training as teachers, forty-eight were women graduates, of whom only two wanted to be science teachers, while of the fifty-one male graduates only fourteen wanted to become science teachers and of these only seven had Honours degrees." Mr. Pickthorn, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Education agreed that the situation was serious and said that the National Advisory Council on the Training and Supply of Teachers began investigating this problem almost a year ago and might be expected to report fairly soon. He said: "In each of the last three years there has been a small increase in the number of men graduates teaching mathematics and science, and the number of women graduates has remained just about steady." He thought, however that time and the changing balance of age groups should gradually improve the situation.

On the 22nd Miss Ward asked the Minister of Education in how many technical colleges in England and Wales equal pay for men and women teachers operates. Miss Horsburgh replied: "In technical colleges maintained by local education authorities the salary scales for full-time teachers are those prescribed in the Burnham Technical Report which makes no provision for equal pay for men and women. The fixing of salaries of part-time teachers is the responsibility of local authorities and I have no precise information on the rates paid. I understand, however, that some authorities give equal pay to part-time men and women teachers." Miss Ward proceeded: "Is my right hon. Friend aware that the Secretary of State for Scotland has negotiated equal pay in the Royal Technical College, Glasgow? If equal pay can be paid in that College why is it not possible, as it is a charge on the Exchequer, for the same privilege to be extended to technical colleges in this country? Will my right hon. Friend kindly

look into it?" Miss Horsburgh, however, only replied: "I have already informed my hon. Friend that the salary scales for full-time teachers in the technical colleges are prescribed in the Burnham Technical Report, and I am going by those salary scales."

On October 22nd Lt.-Col. Lipton asked the Attorney General when the Report of the Royal Commission on the Marriage Laws will be published. The Attorney General replied: "I regret that I am not yet in a position to say when the Report of the Royal Commission is likely to be published. The hon. and gallant member will appreciate that, in view of the wide terms of reference of the Commission and the volume of evidence taken, the preparation of the Report is bound to take a considerable time, but I can assure him that the Chairman is fully aware of the need for the Commission to make its Report as soon as possible." **B. M. Halpern**

### INTERNATIONAL NOTES

**Belgium.** The National Central Committee of employees has started a campaign for the application of the international Convention on equal pay. The Committee mocks at the Government for having so quickly ratified the Convention and asks why since then they have rested on their oars. The Committee calls upon women to take action in order that the slogan "equal pay for equal work" may become a reality.

A new regulation on unemployment came into force on October 1st. It respects rights already granted but it has aroused protests from all the women's organisations and even from the two great Trades Union organisations. In fact, under cover of excluding from unemployment insurance those who do not seriously need work, the decree enforces measures which in reality apply only to married women. The socialist and Christian Trades Unions are with the women's organisations in protesting to Parliament, and their negotiations with the appropriate Minister continue.

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**Marshall Islands.** During the examination by the Trusteeship Council of the annual report on the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands the special representative of the Administering Authority (U.S.A.) introduced Mrs. Dorothy Kabua as a member of the delegation from the Marshall Islands. The President invited her to take her place at the Council Table. Mrs. Kabua spoke in Marshallese and her son interpreted for her. She brought greetings from her people. She said the Micronesians were a happy island people who seek, as do others, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Their efforts towards self-government were progressing, and they were proud to

### REVIEWS

**The Conquest of Devil's Island.** By Charles Pean. (Max Parrish, 10s. 6d.)

This book gives an account of the fight for the suppression of the Penal Settlement in French Guiana of which Devil's Island was but a small part.

It is a wonderful record of the faith and perseverance under incredible conditions of a group of men and women (with their children) from the Salvation Army. They emulated the work of St. Vincent de Paul among the galley slaves of the seventeenth century, and it seems incredible that not one priest of the country of their birth or of their banishment seems to have ministered to these sad and debased criminals, the completion of whose term of punishment in most cases merely gave them the "liberty" to live as best they could in the forests and swamps of the land of their exile. **P.C.C.**

**Are We Really Teaching Religion?** By F. S. Sheed. (Sheed and Ward, 2s.)

This is a "formal publication" of a talk given by Frank Sheed to the Teaching Nuns of Ireland gathered in annual Conference in Dublin about two years ago. Mr. Sheed has added a valuable note containing most of the elucidations asked for. He hopes that the pamphlet may be of use to both teachers and parents: "unless there is co-operation between them religious instruction will go limpingly."

I am glad that Mr. Sheed added that last proviso because those of us who have anything at all to do with the present generation of children know that the heart-breaking thing about their religious education is that the parents so often cannot or do not co-operate. They do in fact need a crusade all their own, in every parish,—for how are Johnny or Mary to take religion seriously, or as anything but an ordinary school subject, if it is so obvious that their parents have either cast off its practice on leaving school or else ceased to take an interest? However, let me hasten to add, perhaps the answer is here. For any child taught Mr. Sheed's way should on leaving school have learned the great doctrines of the Church and have acquired such a liking for these doctrines that he or she will want to go on studying them. This means of course that in the teacher great qualities are expected—qualities of love and of depth and clarity of mind. Yet to those who respond to a great demand much is given by God himself, so that the near-perfect teacher of religion should by no means be an impossibility.

Mr. Sheed says towards the end of his pamphlet that he knows that every element in his "outline" is already being taught. But from the contacts he has made with Catholics "ten years out of school" he realises that these elements are not being learnt in the sense of remaining vivid

stand with the other nations "as a very small but equally peace and freedom loving people." Mrs. Kabua is one of the five elected women representatives of the Marshallese Congress.

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**Sudan.** The Sudanese elections take place this month. They will decide the composition of the first independent Sudanese Parliament and Government and within three years the country will opt for independence or some link with Egypt. In spite of the fact that men only are eligible to vote in the elections members of the Society for the Advancement of Women of the Sudan took part in the self-government celebrations last February. One of the founders of the society, established in 1952, was a Sudanese girl who graduated in medicine from University College, Khartoum, in 1951. Photographs show women addressing crowds at the Sudan Women's Association Festival which took place in August this year.

\* \* \*

**Venezuela.** Aurora Montiel of the tribe of Urani is the first Indian woman to sit as a Deputy in the National Assembly at Caracas. She married without agreeing to the custom that her fiancé must purchase her. Her husband, who had wanted to go to Caracas and study medicine died two years after their marriage and from then on Aurora resolved to devote herself to the liberation of her tribal womenfolk. She wanted, also, Urani lawyers, doctors, and teachers. Since the Princess Aurora has concerned herself with politics the Government of Caracas has sent machinery to aid her people in the difficult task of sinking wells to obtain water. Aurora is a member of the conservative party and she has the right to speak in the Chamber in her tribal language. She is however learning Spanish and her son is teaching her to read and write, for only very gifted boys are admitted to the single school in the Uranian region, so that Aurora was illiterate. She attends the sessions of the Assembly dressed in the costume of her people, a white tunic embroidered with flowers, and her ornaments are necklaces and earrings of gold worked like lace by the tribal craftsmen.—(*World Interpreter*).

\* \* \*

**I.L.O.** Mrs. Ana Figueroa Gajardo, former Chilean Deputy and Permanent Representative to the United Nations, has been appointed Chief of the International Labour Organisation's Women and Children Division, in place of Miss Mildred Fairchild, who is retiring.

### Dr. Eileen Hickey, M.P.

We congratulate our member, Dr. Eileen Hickey, on her re-election to the Northern Ireland Parliament, as Independent for Queen's University, Belfast.



and operative. "The difficulty of all learning," he says, "is the difficulty of seeing the wood for the trees; in this subject (religion) it is almost a tragedy."

Let me quote:—

"Teaching the Faith does not mean simply teaching one thing after another till the list of things teachable is exhausted. The young must be given the shape of reality, with the elements emphasised that matter most—either in themselves as Trinity, Incarnation or Beatific Vision, or as keys to the understanding of these great matters. Reality, seen thus in its true shape, should be ever growing in clarity and so in grip on the mind."

This is a very important publication which should be in the hands of every adult Catholic, whether he teaches religion or no. And it only costs two shillings!

C.S.

**Six Great Englishwomen.** By Yvonne ffrench. (Hamish Hamilton, 10s. 6d.)

Yvonne ffrench has taken as her six great Englishwomen: Queen Elizabeth I; Sarah Siddons; Charlotte Brontë; Florence Nightingale; Queen Victoria; and Gertrude Bell. They are a varied crowd, even the two Queens could not be more different, and Miss ffrench has summarised the life and achievements of each in masterly fashion. She has a great gift for summing up the motives and actions of her subjects in a just and balanced fashion. The study of Gertrude Bell is especially interesting, in that this great woman traveller and archaeologist was one of the first women to have her talents recognised in the diplomatic field. As a result of her work among the Arabs and her understanding of their nature and language she was employed by the British Government, during the 1914-18 war, in Cairo and Delhi, "the only woman among the Generals, staff officers, and civil servants, tactfully negotiating with Arab leaders in the hope of preserving their neutrality." Later, during the British occupation, she worked in Baghdad, and finally, acting as Secretary to Sir Percy Cox, High Commissioner of Iraq (under British Mandate) she was of great assistance to him in creating the new state of Iraq and in giving it a king. The Arabs called Miss Bell "Consules" and great was their grief when in 1923 she died, still holding the post of Director of Antiquities for the Iraq and having worked on the creation of the Iraq Museum until the day of her death.

C.S.

**Six Great Englishmen.** By Aubrey de Sélincourt. (Hamish Hamilton, 10s. 6d.)

This book is a companion volume to *Six Great Englishwomen*. The great Englishmen singled out for study are: Drake; Dr. Johnson; Nelson; Marlborough; Keats; and Churchill. It is rather sad that four out of the six have depended upon the nation's pursuit of war for the expression of their greatness.

C.S.

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