

WOMEN'S HERITAGE
FILE COPY

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.

Principle and Practice

By P. C. Challoner

There is one aspect of the struggle for Equal Pay that is too often overlooked. The rate for the job will not be of much value to women if they are not admitted to the job itself. Equal Pay and Equal Opportunity are irrevocably linked together.

Two years ago the Open Door Council, with whom the Alliance has co-operated for many years, began an investigation to discover what work is available to women and what work is denied them, not by law, but by Trade Union regulations, and it discovered that while the Trade Union Conference was passing impeccable resolutions on the principle of equal pay, Trade Unions themselves have proved to be at fault.

A Questionnaire was sent out to 140 Unions to ask what their regulations were. Of those that replied, eleven stated that the trades with which they were concerned were closed to women by the restrictive agreements made between the trade unions and employers, and only sixteen stated that women were eligible for training and work on the same terms as men. Further investigation last year has added some details—the full picture so far should be read in the 24th and 25th Annual Reports of the Open Door Council.

The latter gives the result of correspondence with the Transport Commission and the National Federation of Building Trade Operatives.

On being asked what work was available to women in Transport, and how far they could advance on the clerical and administrative side of the railway and road services, the British Transport Commission gave the following information:—About 8.3 per cent of the Commission's employed force are women; vacancies in the higher grades of the clerical and administrative side are filled on the basis of suitability and experience and in accordance with arrangements agreed with the Trade Union; they "do not specifically preclude women as such from any position on British Railways" but "the majority of these posts call for practical experience of out-door operating work." No answer

was vouchsafed as to the possibility of women, out of war-time, gaining such "practical experience."

The General Secretary of the National Federation of Building Trade Operatives, in reply to a similar question answered: "There are no women, in the main, employed in our industry, but we have a Women's Agreement" in relation to certain work "which really is a war-time agreement and is now being reviewed. The total number of women inside the agreement is roughly 5,000 We are taking the point of view in our future negotiations that if women desire to come into the industry in the same way as boys they must serve their period of apprenticeship to the crafts and should get the pay for the job."

Other information gleaned from reports (such as those to the Equal Pay Commission), from publications of other organisations and from letters sent by women journalists and others helps to strengthen the contention—long held by the Open Door Council—that so-called "protective" legislation and the night work Convention result in lower wages and fewer opportunities for women. The difference in pay in the woollen industry was stated to be due to the fact that "men weavers cost the employers less in supervision and can, if necessary, work overtime." In the woolcombing section the work is carried on by day and night and the work on the night shift is done by men. While it appears that equal pay is the rule in the Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Trade, its application is evaded by special conditions for women's work. "It is undesirable that females should be employed amongst male operatives in the clicking, press, lasting and finishing departments." "Nothing in this clause (from a provision in the National Agreement) shall prevent employers having specified operations done by female labour, at female rates, under separate working conditions, provided that such operations have been defined by the Local Arbitration Boards for their respective districts."

Similarly in the agreement between the employers' federation and the Trade Union, in the Packing Case Manufacture, equal piece-work rates are laid down but "no female shall be allowed to use nails longer than 1½ inches; boxes and cases other than Government work, containing less than 12 superficial feet shall be recognised as entirely females' work; mineral water cases, beer cases, bottle drainers, etc. are males' work."

By similar agreements women are restricted to the making of certain light goods in the wrought Hollow-ware Industry; to certain processes in sheet metal and brass working; to the preparation of material for pen- and pocket-knives in the Cutlery Trade; and to such work as icing, decorating of cakes, packing and cleaning in the Baking Trade.

In the Printing Industry, where women may not be apprenticed at all to the skilled operations, they may act as machine feeders but not of course at night (when most newspapers are printed).

The question how far opportunities for women are hampered by Trade Union restrictions on apprenticeship or conditions of work was brought to the notice of the Status of Women Commission at Geneva this year by the representative of St. Joan's International Alliance, and in its resolution on the Vocational Guidance and Vocational and Technical Education of Women, the Commission

"requests the International Labour Organisation to collect information as to the extent to which girls and women are excluded from apprenticeship to certain trades by trade unions, by employers or by legal restriction, and to lay this information before the Commission on the Status of Women at the earliest opportunity."

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

Leonora de Alberti in "The Catholic Citizen,"
15th July—August, 1927

What Josephine Baker wrote in 1875, is still the best challenge we have read:

"This system (State Regulation of Vice) writes Mrs. Butler in 1875, necessitates the greatest crime of which earth can be witness, the crime of blotting out the soul by depriving God's creatures of free will, of choice, and of responsibility, and by reducing the human being to the condition of a passive, suffering minister to the basest passions. Yet no power can make of her a mere thing, for the soul awaits the day when it will face its destroyer, and the human nature will yet be avenged of its adversary."—*The Josephine Butler Centenary.*

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

On June 7th at a very happy Bring and Buy Party in Hampstead Mrs. McShine, of Trinidad, was the guest of honour. Miss Nancy Parnell in introducing her referred to Mrs. McShine's work as founder and late President of the Trinidad and Tobago League of Women Voters and as a leader in youth work.

Mrs. McShine described life in Trinidad with its pitch lake and oil wells and the tropical climate which facilitated the production of sugar cane, cocoa, grape-fruit, coffee, tobacco and the vegetables and fruit used as staple food in the island. West Indians had grown away from the land, she said, so that Indians had been introduced as indentured labour. English was the basic language but owing to the mixed races one might hear almost any language spoken. The American influence was strong. The islands were predominantly Catholic owing to the original colonisation by the French and Spanish. Girls were educated equally with boys and primary education was free while secondary education was obtainable through a system of scholarships. There are four open scholarships for boys and one for girls tenable in any University in the United Kingdom. Medicine and law were open to women—but in practice there was much prejudice against women in the various professions. There was equal pay in the civil service but women could not attain the higher grades.

In 1950 the new Trinidad Constitution was declared whereby greater representation was given to the people. But only one woman was nominated to the legislative council. In June 1949 the Trinidad and Tobago League of Women Voters was founded. Equal franchise had been given to women in 1945 and it seemed time that women got together to educate themselves concerning the vital power of the vote. A publicity campaign gained space in the press for articles on citizenship, and radio talks all over the country were organised. The League of Women Voters was received with suspicion and prejudice among M.P.s and among the women themselves—but it gained ground.

It is an organisation which works solely in the political field, dealing with the machinery of Government and training women to use their vote with intelligence. Mrs. McShine explained that party politics hardly existed in the West Indies, most candidates being independent.

After the speaker had answered various questions put by the audience, Miss Challoner moved the vote of thanks, emphasising her delight in Mrs. McShine's true feminism and her freshness of outlook.

The Bring and Buy Sale brought in the welcome sum of £21 0s. 8d. We are grateful to all who helped to make it a success. C.S.

Notes and Comments

The London County Council is to be congratulated on the victory for equal pay. By a unanimous decision of the Council on July 1st, from this date, 2,250 of its women employees will be paid the rate for the job. This decision covers clerical and administrative workers in permanent grades, within the purview of the Council for which there are two rates, one for men and a lower one for women, and also certain temporary workers. Each female officer employed on June 30th will now be placed on the male rate at the appropriate point in the male scale.

The National Insurance Advisory Committee have been asked to consider and report upon the preliminary draft of regulations which would make changes in the classification for national insurance purposes of women in business with their husbands.

The new regulations would entitle a wife who is engaged in business with her husband or is employed by him in his business to be insured as a self-employed person, provided that she ordinarily puts in 24 hours or more each week in the business and that her earnings from it are 20s. a week or more.

Under the present regulations only wives who are partners or similarly associated with their husbands in business and satisfy the other conditions mentioned are entitled to be insured as self-employed persons for that occupation. The wife who is employed by her husband in his business is now classed as a non-employed person.

The Eleventh Council Meeting of St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance will be held in London on September 13th and 14th.

It is proposed to entertain our members from abroad on Sunday afternoon, September 14th, by a visit to Windsor, travelling by special bus. We feel sure that many members will wish to join the party and meet our distinguished guests. Further particulars will be given in the next issue of *The Catholic Citizen*.

If any London members could offer hospitality to those coming from abroad, during the weekend of the Conference, we should be grateful if they would get in touch with Miss Barry at the office.

Mr. Henry Leonard was the only man to win a prize in a sewing contest organised by the National Needle Art Bureau. There were 5,000 entries and he won £50—the first prize in the class for "a garment of own design." The garment was a suit for himself and to improve his tailoring knowledge Mr. Leonard attended Battersea Women's Institute tailoring class.

The British Social Welfare Services, published by the British Council for Aid to Refugees, gives in a convenient form information on what it calls the comprehensive pattern of social welfare services in which voluntary agencies and official bodies co-operate. The information covers employment, accommodation, National Insurance and Assistance, Health and Education, the Protection of Children and the Care of the Aged, with a list of the Advisory Services for Advice and Legal Aid. While drawn up to aid refugees coming to this country the pamphlet will be of considerable interest to people in this country.

"St. Jerome, that great Biblical scholar, felt that it was only when women had the fullest educational opportunities that the Church would have the scope necessary to put all her powers into operation for the common good of mankind."—*From an article on Female Education in "The Southern Cross."*

We ask the prayers of our members for Mary Wall who died on May 12th. She was a faithful member of the Alliance for very many years and served on its executive committee from 1925 to 1928.

Miss Wall came of a Manchester family and was a life-long Liberal, who gave active support to many a Liberal candidate. In the old suffrage days she was generally to be found at the Women Writers' Club where many of her suffrage colleagues congregated.

Miss Wall addressed many meetings for the Alliance and wrote for *The Catholic Citizen*. Her talent for graphology was often given for the benefit of the Alliance, and she helped generously whenever possible. May she rest in peace.

We offer our congratulations to Miss Sheila Thornton of Melbourne on her marriage to Mr. Peter Norman and to Mrs. Moles on the birth of her second son Thomas.

At the 1952 Portrait Exhibition it was good to see among the "Men and Women of Free Enterprise" the excellent portrait of our member, Mrs. Grace Ashton. These portraits depict men and women who have made themselves outstanding names in the business world.

What time, labour, paper, money and worry it would save if every member who has not yet paid her subscription for 1952 (minimum 10s. which includes *The Catholic Citizen*) would send it immediately!

The office will be closed from August 5th till September 1st. Correspondence will be attended to as usual.

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 Catholic Citizen."

Female Circumcision

Speech given by Madame Wanda Grabinska, Consultant for St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance, at the closed meeting of the Committee of the Economic and Social Council on Non-Governmental Organisations, United Nations, New York, May 26th, 1952

I thank you very much for giving me the opportunity of speaking here on behalf of St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance on the subject known as "Female Circumcision"—which, in fact, could have been better described by the word "mutilation." I trust that you have studied the description of this practice in the documents presented to you, and that you are fully aware how inhuman, immoral and degrading this custom is.

We would like, therefore, to limit ourselves now to these points which we think deserve special attention:

First of all, the fact that the majority of the victims of this unfortunate custom are children from 4 to 10 years old, cannot be too strongly emphasized. In this 20th century called so often by the social welfare leaders *The Century of the Child*, the perpetuation of a cruel, painful rite of mutilation on thousands of innocent and defenceless human beings is something which causes the utmost anxiety and calls for the utmost attention. Behind the statement are expert information and evidence about the brutality and child torture involved. Apart from the physical injuries of lasting consequence, the pain phobia and profound mental shock is quoted as especially damaging to the personality of a young girl. Teachers and doctors close to this problem, suggest that much of the backwardness of these women may be traced to this cause, and as one of the leaders in the field expressed it: "*There must be no complacency about this problem.*" In this world of ours in which we come so near to each other, not only through modern technical media of information and communication, but also through the awakening of human awareness of the value and dignity of the individual, apart

from his race, sex and religion; in a time that we know that we are all responsible *for all*, and that "today" will be responsible for "tomorrow"—the care of the moral, physical and mental health of children, *wherever they are*, should be the first concern of our communal conscience.

Secondly, we come to the point of what should be done in this specific matter. The ways and means of prevention and treatment of the harmful custom are threefold: A. Educational—the interpretation through all available means to the men and women of the countries in question of the harmfulness of the custom, and encouragement to discard it in their own families. B. Health measures—among them the abolition of licenses to untrained midwives. C. Legal prohibition of the practice of all forms of "female circumcision."

We know, and we are glad to say that a steady progress in this threefold direction has been made by the enlightened leaders and circles of the local societies as well as promotional bodies, doctors and health visitors. We are fully aware that the improvement of the situation can be accomplished only and exclusively by attacking the roots of the problem—but we feel, however, that it is the duty of the United Nations to help those people to help themselves.

Thirdly, our deep conviction that the ECOSOC is the proper body to find the best ways and means to that effect, has brought our organization, sponsored by so many of the other Non-Governmental Organizations to put the matter before you.

The Council has already before it the resolution adopted at the Sixth Session of the Status of Women Commission referring to certain areas

of the world "where women are deprived of essential Human Rights, even that of physical integrity," and inviting the Trusteeship Council to take immediate action with a view to abolishing in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories, all such customs.

While supporting the action proposed by the Status of Women Commission, St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance wishes to call attention to the fact that this evil is not one which is confined to such territories, but is also found in certain Sovereign States. We would be grateful if ECOSOC would take this into consideration, as the matter is one of fundamental human rights, and should be dealt with as such.

These inhuman practices in question, which were reported on in detail to a closed session of the Status of Women Commission, seemed to these women delegates from 16 countries, in fearful contrast to the liberties which have been proclaimed as the right of the individual in the Charter of the United Nations and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The women and children who suffer under these practices are inarticulate and submissive, but they have the right as human beings to expect this Council to take immediate steps toward ending their suffering and degradation.

Resolution passed by ECOSOC

It is with great satisfaction that St. Joan's International Alliance records the following resolution on female circumcision adopted by the United Nations Economic and Social Council at its Fourteenth Session on May 28th, 1952. The voting was fourteen to none and three abstentions.

1. *Considering* that one of the purposes of the United Nations is to promote and encourage respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion,

2. *Considering* that there are areas of the world, including certain Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories, where women are deprived of certain essential human rights, including the right to their physical integrity and moral dignity,

3. *Invites* all States, including States which have or assume responsibility for the administration of Non-Self-Governing Territories, to take immediately all necessary measures with a view to abolishing progressively in the countries and territories under their administration all customs which violate the physical integrity of women, and which thereby violate the dignity and worth of the human person as proclaimed in the Charter and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

4. *Invites* the Trusteeship Council, in collaboration with the administering authorities, to take immediately all appropriate measures to promote the progressive abolition of such customs in Trust Territories, and to consider the inclusion of the necessary questions in the questionnaires provided for in Article 88 of the Charter as well as the inclusion of the pertinent information received from administering authorities in its annual report to the General Assembly;

5. *Invites* the General Assembly to request the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories to take paragraph 3 above into account in its examination of the information transmitted under heading C. of Part III of the Standard Form for the Guidance of Members in the preparation of information to be transmitted under Article 73e of the Charter adopted by the General Assembly on 7 December 1951 as resolution 551 (VI).

The Economic and Social Council had before it the resolution passed on April 4th, just eight weeks previously, at the Sixth Session of the Status of Women Commission in Geneva (see *The Catholic Citizen*, May 1952).

It is gratifying that the resolution, as amended by ECOSOC was broadened to include Sovereign States, and indeed all States, irrespective of whether they are Members of the United Nations or not, and States which are responsible for the administration of Non-Self-Governing Territories and Trust Territories. It is gratifying too, that the resolution, while recognising that this custom can only be abolished "progressively", asks for measures to be taken "immediately."

The amended resolution was put forward by Belgium, Cuba and the United Kingdom with further amendments by the Philippines, Uruguay and Argentina. That the United Kingdom sponsored this resolution, happily dispels any misapprehension caused by the United Kingdom delegate's vote of abstention at the Status of Women Commission.

St. Joan's International Alliance is grateful to its Consultant, Madame Wanda Grabinska, for so ably presenting the case to ECOSOC.

ST. JOAN

The Halo and the Sword, by Mary Purcell (M. H. Gill, 12s. 6d).

This new story of St. Joan of Arc is an imaginative reconstruction of the historical records. The pity is that imagination and record are not clearly distinguishable.

The words and actions of the Saint are so impressive in themselves that it seems unnecessary to give pages to fanciful accounts of the saints of her Voices. Again, the fact of her appeal to the Pope is too important to be made the result of a dream in which she hears her mother say "every child of the Church has the right to ask to have his cause heard in Rome." Surely she had her instructed Catholic mind and her Voices so that to add imaginings of fact is to weaken, not heighten, the effect of the Saint's own impact on the reader.

At the same time, where the role of imagination is proper in the description of the life and people of the time, the author has used it to give a vivid and picturesque background to the story. P.C.C.

THE MONTH IN PARLIAMENT

In addition to the urgent discussion on June 25th on Korean policy and Anglo-American co-operation, the Finance Bill passed through its Committee and Report stages, Town Development, Agriculture and Road Safety were discussed and the controversial topic of the BBC Charter. The new increases in Pensions were also debated on June 24th.

On June 10th Mr. Lewis asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer " (1) What arrangements he has made and what date has been fixed for the calling of an early meeting of the National Whitley Council for the Civil Service to discuss with the Staff Side the early implementation of the principle of equal pay in the Civil Service; (2) on what he submitted his proposals to the National Whitley Council for the gradual introduction of equal pay in the Civil Service, in accordance with the recent decision of the House of Commons." When Mr. Butler, in reply, quoted his statement of May 16th, Mr. Lewis pursued " I am well aware of that because I was in the House at the time, but the Financial Secretary made a promise and said it was the Government's policy gradually to introduce equal pay. I am asking, in both questions, the date when he made the application for the Whitley Council to meet and decide this issue. Can he tell if he made an approach or when he intends to make an approach to the appropriate Whitley Council for the introduction of equal pay." Mr. Butler replied: " If I remember rightly the Financial Secretary said that discussions would not be precluded when our consideration had been carried a stage further. We have not yet concluded our consideration and therefore I cannot carry the matter a stage further." Mr. Lewis then said: " Will the Chancellor give an assurance that when his investigations are completed he will make an application, through his appointed officers to the National Whitley Council?" Mr. Butler countered: " I shall naturally adhere to the considered statement which was made by the Financial Secretary." Mr. Donnelly then asked: " Is it not a fact that the right hon. Gentleman's answer is one more example of shelving this particular problem? Will he not give some firm date on which we shall have some answer to this question?" and Mr. Osborne asked: " Is it not a fact that this question was shelved by the three previous Chancellors?"

On 11th June Mr. Braine asked the Colonial Secretary " whether he will consider, in conjunction with the Government of Trinidad, amendment of the law so as to permit women to serve on juries." Mr. Hopkinson replied: " Arrangements for jury service are a matter within the discretion of the Trinidad Government. The

question of amending the law to enable women to serve as jurors was recently considered by the Trinidad Government when the local Jury Ordinance was under review. It was then decided not to pursue the matter since there is no general demand for the inclusion of women as jurors and that jury service by women would create difficulties under local conditions. In the circumstances, I do not propose to take any action."

On June 25th Mr. Sorensen asked the Foreign Secretary " how far the German Contractual Agreement will include arrangements or proposals in respect of financial and judicial aid for German illegitimate children of Allied soldiers." Mr. Nutting replied: " The conventions concluded with the Federal Republic do not include any special arrangements for financial aid for German illegitimate children of Allied soldiers. When, however, the Conventions enter into force, a German woman who has an illegitimate child by an allied Service man will be able to bring affiliation proceedings against the alleged father in a German court." Mr. Sorensen pursued: " While thanking the hon. Gentleman for the latter part of his reply, may I ask him whether any proposals about this matter were made in the proceedings leading up to the agreement, particularly as, when Questions were asked some time ago, hope was expressed that this would be considered in the subsequent discussion?" In answer to this Mr. Nutting said: " I can tell the hon. Gentleman that the possibility of a German woman seeking affiliation proceedings in a German court arises out of one of the conventions signed in Bonn the other day." Mr. Sorensen then asked if it was retrospective and Mr. Nutting replied that he would like notice of that question.

The debate on Supply on June 19th covered expenditure on United Nations specialised agencies and Mr. Sorensen protested because no active objection was made by the British Delegate when Catholic countries refused to allow the World Health Organization to spend its money—or rather the money of contributing members—on investigating and reporting on Birth Control. Mr. Sorensen claimed that Catholics did in fact believe in Birth Control. He said: " The modern intelligent Catholic himself makes it clear that he does not want an excessive population. He recognises the problem. He does not want every mother to bear all the children she can and thus convert the glory of maternity into a tyranny. The only difference between Catholics and Protestants is in the method of birth control. Therefore I say it is really monstrous for certain Powers to frustrate the need and desire of other Powers to deal with that aspect of an acute problem." Mr. Sorensen was supported by Mr. Anthony Hurd. **B. M. HALPERN**

INTERNATIONAL NOTES

Australia. Edna Zigemine, famous throughout the north of Australia as the only long-distance woman " boss " cattle drover, was recently married to a fellow drover John Jessup. When she was fifteen her family drove a mob of 1,200 cattle from Wave Hill in the far west of the Northern Territory to Morestone in Queensland and it was on this trip that her father observed the remarkably ability of his daughter in handling her horse and cattle. He decided to teach her droving and for the following six years she worked the stock routes with her father. When he fell ill Edna took over as boss. She was in personal charge of a mob of 1,250 head of cattle with a number of white and aboriginal drovers on trek from the Kimberleys to Dajarra. She has been in charge of three overland trips from the far Western Australia border into Queensland with over 1,000 cattle, and one trip from central territory to Winton, Central Queensland. (*International Women's News.*)

South Australia. The Hon. Secretary of the South Australian Section of the Alliance, Miss Helen Devaney, writes: " Throughout Australia women were granted 75 per cent of the male rate of pay in December 1950 but the South Australian Industrial Court saw fit, in the case of female clerks, to order that their margin for skill should be calculated separately so that as a result, women clerks received for some months only 62 per cent of the male wage. On appeal, the Full Court reversed the decision and the women clerks have been restored to the former percentage.

" There is a strong move amongst the women's organisations in this State, in which St. Joan's Alliance has joined, to have women included on jury panels. With the present Government however, there seems no immediate prospect of succeeding."

U.S.A. A decision handed down by the full bench of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court on February 1st, 1952, may be said to mark another milestone in the recognition of woman's individuality. The case which came before the High Court was an appeal from a decision of the Probate Court declining jurisdiction in a separate support case where the husband lived in New York State and the Court ruled that a wife's legal domicile was that of her husband. The suit also involved a request for custody of two minor children by the mother living in Massachusetts with her own family to whom she had returned when their break up occurred. The decision of the Supreme Judicial Court declared that a woman who leaves her husband in another State for cause can acquire legal domicile here, and that the Probate Courts of the Commonwealth have juris-

diction in such separate support action. The suit was therefore remanded to the Judge of the Probate Court where it first arose, for reconsideration and action. This judgment falls in line with statutory provisions permitting separate domicile for voting purposes under specified condition. (*Hilda Hedstrom Quirk.*)

* * *

Yugoslavia. The first ratification of the Convention on Equal Remuneration of men and women workers for work of equal value is that of Yugoslavia.

REVIEWS

Edith Stein, by Sister Teresia de Spiritu Sancto, O.D.C., translated by Cecily Hastings and Donald Nicholl (Sheed and Ward, 15s.).

This recently published short account of one of the most remarkable women of our time will be of special interest to members of St. Joan's Alliance. Edith Stein was the very type of the great Jewish women of the Old Testament. Wise, courageous, generous in mind and heart. Yet withal feminine, high-spirited and gentle.

Born and bred in a fine type of strictly orthodox Jewish household, one of the seven children of an admirable widowed mother, Edith grew up to be a brilliant scholar, and a distinguished philosopher. Pupil to and later assistant of the great German philosopher, Husserl, the path of her cultured life seemed to lie clear and straight before her. Then she became a Catholic, to the grief and bewilderment of the mother she dearly loved—and then she became a Carmelite nun. Frau Stein was old and heartbroken, but she forgave even if she never quite understood her daughter. As a nun, Sister Teresia Benedicta of the Cross combined her learning with the utmost light-hearted humility. As a Jewish Catholic she had a deep sense of responsibility towards her own people—like Judith and Esther she offered her prayers and sacrifices for her race—if opportunity came she would gladly offer her life. It came. At the beginning of the last war, she was sent by her community of the Carmel in Cologne, to Echt in Holland, where it was thought she might be safe from the Nazis. But she was soon taken away, calm, collected, gentle as ever, and was murdered in a gas-chamber. Someone who survived saw her the day she arrived at Westerbork Concentration Camp, and has since told of the kindness and shining peace of the nun as she helped the utterly distracted mothers with their crying children, as she moved quietly about, consoling, selfless. The Informatory Process for the beatification of Sister Teresia Benedicta has been introduced. If ever she is raised to the altars of the Church, may this noble Jewish woman be, in a very special

way, a heavenly guide and counsellor of the women of St. Joan's Alliance.

MARY GRACE ASHTON

The Fearless Heart, by Georges Bernanos, translated by Michael Legat (The Bodley Head, 10s. 6d.).

On July 17th, 1794, sixteen nuns of the Carmel of Compiègne were guillotined in Paris. "The Fearless Heart" is the scenario of a film based on the stages that led to their martyrdom, from the taking of the Convent inventory in 1790, followed by their expulsion in 1792, their removal to La Conciergerie in June, 1794, and their triumphant death a month later.

The book makes strange reading. One wonders why the author chose what must have been for him an unfamiliar medium to tell this moving story. The rapid changes of scene and the long "stage directions" (which we are told in the Publisher's Note were not included in the MS) destroy all sense of continuity. No cinema audience would sit through the long speeches of the Prioress and the Sub-Prioress or the frequent "silences" devoid of action.

The character drawing in the dialogue is striking. The diversity of view between the Prioress, a shrewd, practical bourgeoisie, and the Sub-Prioress, a lady of noble, perhaps royal blood, cause clashes of will, always within the borders of decorum, that clearly mark the latent antagonism between the two women. The young postulants, Sister Constance full of sanctity and serenely gay, is admirably contrasted with poor Sister Blanche, dominated by fear, so much so that doubting what might happen with her during interrogation, she is smuggled to a safe hiding place in Paris. Yet finally when she hears of the condemnation of her sisters, she rushes to the Place de la Révolution, pushes her way to the guillotine and, the last of the Community, mounts the steps singing. E.F.G.

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OBJECT

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

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