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THE
CATHOLIC CITIZEN

VOLUME XVII. 1931.



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

THE
CATHOLIC CITIZEN

VOLUME XVII 1931



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WOMEN'S SERVICE

FILE COPY

THE NOT TO BE TAKEN AWAY

Catholic Citizen

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

Vol. XVII, No. 1.

15th JANUARY, 1931.

Price Twopence.

Daughter of the ancient Eve,
We know the gifts ye gave and give;
Who knows the gifts which you shall give,
Daughter of the Newer Eve?

—Francis Thompson.

Women and Land Settlement.

By C. M. GORDON, M.A.

It is seldom realised that women have, from time immemorial, played an important part in agriculture. In primitive times while the men busied themselves with hunting and warfare, the women were occupied in caring for the domesticated animals and in rudimentary cultivation, and it is interesting to note that in regions still untouched by civilization, e.g., in parts of Africa, instances of this division of labour may still be seen.

We learn from the last census that the part played by women is still great. There are approximately 20,000 women farmers and 100,000 women workers in England and Wales, and we must reckon a further million, who as wives and daughters of agriculturalists take a large share (although mostly unpaid) in agricultural work. In both these categories numbers are likely to increase rapidly in the near future, owing to the importance now being attached to those branches of agriculture, which have always been regarded as peculiarly women's province. Although people may still be found who assume that agriculture and wheatgrowing are synonymous, it is now widely recognised that for the regeneration of agriculture we must look to increased production of such food stuffs as eggs, poultry, cheese, vegetables, bacon and fruit, the very articles with which women have been chiefly concerned. In 1929 we

imported fifty-five million pounds worth of butter, fourteen million of cheese, and twenty-one-and-a-half million of eggs and poultry, making, together with other non-cereal products, over two hundred million pounds worth. We produced similar foodstuffs to almost exactly the same value, and there does not appear to be any valid reason why, by employing modern methods, we should not spend in our own country the greater part of this large sum.

All parties are agreed that something must be done for agriculture and without delay, and the Labour Party which, being in office, has the power to act, has introduced a measure—The Agricultural Land (Utilisation) Bill—which it is pushing through with great speed. Other subsidiary Bills, e.g., the Agricultural Marketing Bill, are designed to complement this measure, which provides for experimental work in large scale farming, re-conditioning of land suitable for agriculture, and settlement on the land of suitable persons, unable to obtain work in their usual occupations. Under existing acts County Councils are empowered to create smallholdings, and certain of them, e.g., Cambridge, Norfolk and Somerset, have done much in this direction. In others the Small Holdings Acts are practically a dead letter, and the Agricultural Land (Utilisation) Bill empowers the Minister of Agriculture to settle people in areas where

there is still an unsatisfied demand. Another clause empowers County and Borough Councils to provide Cottage Holdings, for sale or rent to suitable applicants, who undertake to reside permanently in the cottage and cultivate the land. Another authorises the provision of allotments for people not fully employed, and it is hoped that from among these applicants for larger holdings may subsequently be selected. Provision is also made in the Bill for loans to provide working capital and for temporary maintenance allowances.

The publication of these proposals evoked general interest, and they were immediately studied carefully by societies, which like our own, are concerned with seeing that women shall share equally with men in employment schemes financed from public funds. As many women who have only what they earn, and many more, whose little capital is inadequate to support them in idleness, are anxious to take advantage of the scheme and be "on their own" rather than the employee of someone else, consideration of the terms of the scheme provoked considerable dissatisfaction with the wording of the Bill, which employed throughout the words "him" and "himself," and thus appeared to indicate that its provisions were intended to benefit men only. The Alliance raised the matter at the Conference on "Women and Unemployment" recently organised by the Women's Freedom League, and followed this up with a strong letter to the Minister of Agriculture and to the Prime Minister, in which they asked that it should be clearly laid down that:

1. Women and men have equal opportunity of access to land and equal claim to financial assistance.
2. The presence of qualified women is indispensable on local agricultural committees and sub-committees and any other bodies charged with the administration of the proposed Act.

They further demanded that the Ministry of Agriculture should itself set the example by assuring the appointment of qualified women on any new national bodies concerned (such as the proposed Agricultural Land Corporation) and rectifying the present inadequate representation of women's interests at the Ministry by improvement, in connection with the new appointments fore-

shadowed under the Bill, of the status and number of women employed on their own staff. How necessary is this last recommendation is clear to anyone who followed the evidence recently given by the Permanent Secretary before the Royal Commission on Women in the Civil Service.

It is now understood that the first claim has been conceded, but until the Bill emerges from Committee and is discussed on its Report and Third Reading stages, we shall not know whether the other two points have been incorporated in the measure. Nor shall we know whether the Government intend to provide suitable training, not only in field work and the care of stock, but also in rural home-making, another point to which the Alliance has drawn their attention. On the Continent the housewife makes far better use of the materials at her command than do our British wives and daughters; and co-ordinated instruction in the production, preservation and use of foodstuffs is urgently needed.

The proposals contained in the Government measures will involve heavy expenditure, possibly from twelve to fifteen millions. Let us see that this money is spent wisely and that its spenders realise that unless they make contented the women, who both directly and indirectly are so largely interested in agriculture, the drift to the towns will not be arrested and the money expended on land settlement be largely wasted.

We congratulate the women who appear on the New Year's Honours List. We are particularly glad to see among them such friends of our movement as Dr. Jane Walker, Mrs. Swanwick, Lady Aberdeen, Miss Caroline Haslett and Dr. Louisa Martindale.

DEATH OF MISS CLEGG.

We heard with deep regret of the death of Miss Clegg, whose loss will be widely felt in the feminist movement.—R.I.P.

NEW YEAR'S PARTY.

We call the attention of our members to the New Year's Party (see p. 7), to be held on Thursday, 22nd, at 3 St. James' Terrace, Regents Park, by kind permission of our member, Dr. Shattock.

Notes and Comments.

We offer our best wishes for 1931 to all our readers; we hope, amongst other good things, the new year holds many victories for the feminist cause.

* * * *

The following resolution, passed at a recent meeting of the Executive Committee of St. Joan's S.P.A., has been forwarded to the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary, and the Secretary of State for the Dominions:

"This meeting rejoices that the Nationality of Married Women Bill was passed without a division, but it deeply regrets that the Government, while emphatically approving the terms of the Bill, propose instead of supporting it, to introduce one of their own, which while removing certain disabilities, fails to deal with the fundamental principle, viz., the right of a married woman herself to choose whether to retain or surrender her nationality.

It calls upon the Government to adopt Dr. Ethel Bentham's Nationality of Married Women Bill and pass it into law before the end of the session."

* * * *

Another Bill of peculiar interest to women is the Married Women (Torts Bill), which was given a First Reading on December 9th. The Bill was introduced by Mr. Tinne (N. Wavertree), and proposes "to remove the liability of husbands for torts committed by their wives, whether before or after marriage." A husband's liability for his wife's misdeeds dates from the time when a wife had no right to have any money of her own, even money earned by the sweat of her brow. Some change in the law should have been made when the Married Women's Property Act was passed. However, if a woman has no means of her own and devotes her time to her home and children, should she incur a fine, if her husband does not pay it, we fail to see who will, until such time as wives have a definite share of the family income.

* * * *

The promised circular to local health authorities on maternal mortality has now been issued by the Ministry of Health. The circular calls attention to the interim report

of the Departmental Committee on Maternal Mortality, and states that the Government is taking steps to draw up a national scheme based on the recommendations of the report. The circular urges local authorities to use fully such powers as they already possess, and a memorandum is annexed containing suggestions for the improvement of local services.

* * * *

We congratulate our co-religionist, Alderman Kathleen Chambers, on her election as Deputy Lord Mayor of Bradford. She was the first woman to be elected to the Council, and has served on it for ten years. When opening the recent Green, White and Gold Fair, Alderman Chambers appealed to women to strengthen their organizations in every possible way; women councillors could do little effective work without the active support of women's organizations.

* * * *

The Annual Meeting.

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

The Annual Meeting will be held on March 14th. Resolutions for the Agenda, and Nominations for Committee, duly proposed and seconded, must reach the Secretary not later than *February 2nd*.

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

Will members please take this as the official notice.

* * * *

ST. JOAN'S QUINCENTARY CELEBRATIONS.

A *Drawing Room Meeting* will be held at "Duart," 67 Grand Drive, Raynes Park, S.W.20., on Thursday, January 29th, at 3 p.m. *Speaker*: Miss Barbara Barclay Carter, Lic-ès-L., on "The Life of St. Joan." *Chairman*: Miss F. A. Underwood. *Hostess*: Mrs. Catmur. Collection for the Quincentenary Celebration Appeal.

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE,

AND

Editorial Office of "Catholic Citizen":

55 BERNERS STREET, LONDON, W.1. Tel. Museum 4181

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

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

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Bonne Mère.

Victorine Teresa Chupin, whose goodness earned for her the title of Bonne Mère, was born in Nantes in January 1813, in troubled times for Church and State. Her grandparents, denounced for their faith, had had to fly from their blood-thirsty persecutors. On their return to Nantes, their son Louis, Teresa's father (she dropped the Victorine in later life) married Julienne Houssais, who had a day school for girls. It is surprising that Teresa did not turn from religion, since her father, with misdirected piety, spent his morning in hearing one Mass after another, to the ruin of his business, and consequently ruin of his wife and family. A narrow, harsh and repellent piety, which might well have driven his family from such a fold. His wife was very different, hers was a joyous and sane piety, which brought gladness into the austere home, poor as it was, and Teresa modelled herself on her mother. Though from her girlhood Teresa had felt a call to devote her life to God, she never felt attracted to the religious life, not even when, for the sake of her Institute, she was compelled to enter the Dominican Order. Bonne Mère does not seem to fit into the conventional mould of a religious.

Her life work was the rescue of unfortunate girls from an immoral life, and she ultimately founded the Congregation of Our Lady of Grace, at Châtillon-sous-Bagneux, Seine, but she had a long and thorny path

to tread first. While still in the early twenties she was appointed Superintendent of St. Lazare Prison for women of disreputable character. It was at the time a sink of iniquity, the wardens leading an unbridled life of drunkenness and debauchery. The Chief Commissioner of Police, distressed at the shocking conditions prevailing at St. Lazare, hearing of the conversion by Bonne Mère of a notorious woman, offered her, despite her youth, the post of Superintendent of St. Lazare—at the time there could be no question of giving the supervision of the prison to nuns.

Teresa Chupin was repelled by the idea of being amongst the poor prisoners—but after seeing a vision of Our Lady, she accepted the post, and under her devoted care St. Lazare and its inmates were transformed. She carried on her charitable labours for twelve years, and after leaving the prison founded St. Anne's Institute, a refuge for destitute girls.

In his preface Henry Bordeaux tells us that she had been nicknamed "the divine ragpicker," for Teresa Chupin, like her Master, went about seeking sinners. She had the faith that removes mountains, she did not fear to found her Refuge when she was practically penniless, and strange things happened in that home of faith. We hear, on authentic evidence, of lamps that burned without oil, of unexpected visitors bringing food when supplies had

run short, of sublime joy in the midst of destitution.

Bonne Mère's Institute was not burdened with rules and regulations, it was for this that she dreaded ecclesiastical intervention, she ruled by love, her girls were free to come and go; there was no humiliating uniform to be worn, a simple, even elegant uniform was worn on high days and holidays. Her influence over the girls was marvellous.

Bonne Mère's characteristic unconventionality was never more marked than when she called upon Alexandre Dumas, fils, and asked him to make amends for any evil his writings had caused to women, by helping St. Anne's Refuge; he became the knight and apostle of St. Anne's, he wrote articles in his own paper, the *Journal Dargatan*, and published a pamphlet, which ran to two editions, entitled "Les Madeleine's Repenties, Refuge St. Anne, Paris." No one but Bonne Mère, lovable and unconventional, could have conceived the idea of making a confederate of Alexandre Dumas, it is not surprising that she feared conventional regulations, though they have their uses. Indeed at long last she saw the necessity of rules, and became Foundress and Prioress General of a Dominican Congregation, her work had developed beyond her simple rule. She saw the need, but none the less to conform to the strict rules of a convent life caused her great suffering. She died on the 21st April, 1896. Père Ollivier wrote: "... her grave has become a place of continuous pilgrimage for both the Sisters and the children who go there eagerly because, they say, there comes from it a virtue which comforts and consoles them, if indeed they could be consoled. Her spirit, they say, accompanies and follows us everywhere."

In the goodly company of the Saints Bonne Mère has a special niche, her type of sanctity is singularly attractive to the modern mind.

The life has been well translated by the Dominican nuns of Portobello Road, London.

L. DE ALBERTI.

Bonne Mère. Revd. Mother Chupin. By R. P. Mortier, O.P. Translated by the Dominican Nuns, Portobello Road. (Sands & Co., 5s. net.)

Reviews.

Save the Mothers. By E. Sylvia Pankhurst. (Alfred A. Knopf, 6s.).

Miss Pankhurst writes with sincerity and conviction of the tragic waste of life by the preventable deaths of women in childbirth. She writes, too, not as one who has read the subject up, but as one who has worked among the poor, and studied the problem at first hand. She presents a National Maternity Scheme which she believes would be effective. Certainly the present system has not lowered the high death rate among mothers, which has remained stationary for years. It is time, indeed, that other measures were taken. On the fly leaf of the book stands a quotation from Dame Janet Campbell: "Until it is realised that much of the poignant sorrow and suffering caused by misadventure at the time of childbirth is not inevitable and can be lessened, we shall be slow to find the time, money, effort and good will needed to persuade all concerned to combine to overcome the practical difficulties of the problem." Unfortunately Miss Pankhurst does not seem to realize the importance of the work done by midwives, and that alone would militate against her scheme.

Miss Pankhurst gives letters on the subject from prominent men and women, including the Prime Minister, Mr. Bernard Shaw, Lady Cynthia Moseley, Miss Ellen Wilkinson, Dr. Eric Pritchard. Her book will help to focus public opinion on an urgent problem, and so bring the solution closer.

L. DE A.

Protection or Freedom? By Marian Reeves. Women's Freedom League; 3d.

In this pamphlet Miss Reeves gives a lucid and comprehensive account of the case against Protective Legislation applied to women only, which, in fact, so far from protecting the woman-worker, restricts her freedom of choice, and tends to keep her the under dog of industry. "Protective Legislation. Whom does it protect?" says the fly-leaf. Well, some people think that it protects men from the competition of women. To others that statement would be rank heresy, and a libel on woman's "natural protector." The societies which stand for freedom for the industrial woman

(Continued on p. 7.)

International Notes.

A recent number of *La Française* gave a report of a meeting held to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the *Union Catholique d'Etudes Internationales*. H. E. Cardinal Verdier, Archbishop of Paris, and the papal Nuncio, Mgr. Maglione, presided. The general secretary of the Union, Mgr. Beaupin, gave a report of the ten years' work, and emphasized the fact that the Union had collaborated with the League of Nations, especially in combating forced labour, the traffic in women, slavery, and the traffic in opium and other narcotics. Mgr. Beaupin concluded by asserting the necessity for Catholics to co-operate with non-Catholic societies whenever the need arose in questions well defined.

As Mme. Malaterre-Sellier, who signs the report, says, we may congratulate ourselves in noting how numerous are those who now agree with us that all persons of good will must unite in working for great causes of general interest.

The campaign against State Regulation of Vice continues to gain ground in France; the Twelfth National Congress of the "Jeune République," in a strong resolution, re-affirmed its condemnation of a system condemned by right, morality, and modern hygiene, the continuation of which is a dishonour to France. The resolution points out that the system has been abolished in nearly all the other great civilised countries of Europe, and has been condemned by two Assemblies of the League of Nations.

L'Union Temporaire contre la Prostitution réglementée, etc., has addressed a letter to 387 mayors of France pointing out the grave dangers attending State Regulation of Vice, and suffrage groups are asked to take similar action.

Prabuddha Stri, official organ of the Women's Franchise Union of Ceylon, reports that the Municipal Suffrage is still to be denied to the women of Colombo. Strangely enough the women of Ceylon have the franchise for the Legislature, but cannot vote or be elected to District Councils. The W.F.U. announced its intention to agitate

until this glaring piece of injustice has been rectified, and to continue its campaign until distinctions between men and women are removed in all civic elections. We wish the women of Ceylon good luck.

In the recent Austrian Elections eleven women were returned to Parliament, a gain of five seats. The International Women's News reports that ninety per cent. of women used their vote. As it is a custom for men and women to use different-coloured ballot papers, it was possible to ascertain that women, who have a numerical preponderance, cast a greater number of votes, which shows that they were alive to the importance of their duty as citizens.

We are glad to note in the *N.C.W.C. Review* that the National Council of Women, U.S.A., is making a special study of problems relating to women in industry, with a view to working for the improvement of the condition of the woman industrial worker.

A. A. B.

Catholic Action Society.

To the Editor, CATHOLIC CITIZEN,

We have been so strongly urged from several quarters to make more publicly known the kind of work which our Society is doing, that we venture to call the attention of your readers to one of its departments, viz., that of Press Defence.

Our aim is to deal with attacks on the Church made in the Press, especially in the weeklies, and to correct misrepresentations of her teaching and practice. This is done by means of letters or articles published, if possible, in the papers which printed the attacks.

Composed as it is of Theological Professors and students, and having an extensive library at its disposal, the C.A.S. will often be able to give welcome help to those who would like to see the Catholic case fairly presented. The Society can draw on a six years' experience to discriminate between such attacks and decide which call the more urgently for reply. But special consideration will always be given to cuttings sent to us by priests, or on a priest's recommendation.

It will be realised that such cuttings should be forwarded to us as soon as possible after publication, if the antidote is to be prepared in time.

CATHOLIC ACTION SOCIETY,
HEYTHROP COLLEGE,
CHIPPING NORTON, OXON.

REVIEWS.—(Contd.)

worker, are not against protective legislation for all workers. Miss Reeves makes this clear: "While we welcome any legislation that safeguards the interests and well-being of the employees, we demand that the only considerations shall be the kind of work, and the particular dangers to which the workers in that industry are exposed, and that such safety regulations as are necessary shall apply to all workers irrespective of sex." That the doctrine is gaining ground is proved by the fact that the Convention prohibiting night work for women is to be re-considered. A notable victory.

L. DE A.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS.

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Minimum Annual Subscriptions	12	0	
	£14	6	9

TREASURER'S NOTE.

The beginning of the year is the time for paying subscriptions, so please, members, make your first subscription payable to St. Joan's Alliance. If only all members will send their subscriptions punctually, it will save our devoted workers endless labour, worry and expense, and will be the best New Year present that the Alliance can receive.

VERA LAUGHTON MATHEWS,
Hon. Treasurer.

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS.—All communications respecting Advertisements to be addressed THE MANAGER, *Catholic Citizen*, 55, Berners Street, London, W.1.,

NEW YEAR'S PARTY.

A delightful New Year Party will be held on Thursday, January 22nd, at 8 p.m., by the kindness of our member, Dr. Shattock, at her house, 3 St. James' Terrace, Regents Park, N.W.8. The Party will be somewhat on the lines of our Garden Party of last summer, and will combine a social gathering and some delightful entertainments with some "sideshows" designed to swell the funds of our Alliance. There will also be Bridge. All members are invited as far as space permits, and they should notify their acceptance to Miss Barry at 55 Berners Street, W.1. Those present will have the great pleasure of hearing some of Miss Eleanor Fitzgerald's fascinating Irish stories, always a treat for St. Joan's audiences. A new treat will be to hear Mrs. Fox play the violin, and little Miss Margaret Shattock is also going to play the violin. "Pandora" will tell fortunes and there will be a few money-making amusements. Refreshments will be served at moderate prices.

Altogether a very enjoyable evening is promised, and members will do well to write quickly as space is naturally limited. No. 74 bus passes the door; nearest station, St. John's Wood Road.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH.

Hon. Secretary: Miss N. S. Parnell, B.A.,
45 Falkner Street, Liverpool.

Though not as well attended as the Committee had hoped, the Whist Drive on December 9th was much enjoyed, and it realised £4 15s. towards the £5 decided upon as this Branch's contribution to St. Joan's Quinquenary Celebrations. For this gratifying result we are largely indebted to the substantial donations of two sympathetic outsiders, and to the generosity of several members of the Committee who provided the prizes and the refreshments.

Annual Subscriptions.

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

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

NON-PARTY.

Office—55, Berners St., Oxford St., London, W.1.

Patron: Saint Joan of Arc. Colours: Blue, White & Gold

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

OBJECT.

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

MEMBERSHIP.

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

THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S NEWS

(JUS SUFFRAGII)

is an international record of the Woman's Movement. Unique in its scope this paper will appeal to every woman with a wide interest in world events.

Section Française.

Subscription: 6s. per annum, post free.

Free specimen copy from the Circulation Manager, International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship,

190 Vauxhall, Bridge Road, London, S.W.1.

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