

WOMEN'S SERVICE
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THE

Catholic Citizen

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

Vol. XIV, No. 5.

15th MAY, 1928.

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.

Equal Rights.

(Communicated by the National Woman's Party.)

According to Doris Stevens, Chairman of the Committee on International Action of the National Woman's Party, Feminist history was made at the Pan-American Conference just ended. Miss Steven's presented to the Conference an Equal Rights Treaty which, when signed by any two governments, would wipe out all discriminations against women in the laws of those countries.

At a luncheon given in her honour at the National Headquarters of the Woman's Party, Miss Stevens made the following statement of the feminist advances gained at Havana.

"Feminist history was made at Havana.

"Three important things happened at the Pan-American Conference just ended to further international feminism in the Americas and so in the entire world.

"(1) A hearing was granted to the Committee on International Action of the National Woman's Party before a plenary session of the Conference. This was the first time in the history of international conferences that women, not delegates to the conference, were permitted to present their claims to equality with men before the law. The wide-spread interest in the hearing was shown by the fact that when the minutes of that hearing were printed in the daily 'Diario' of the Conference, every copy of that issue was exhausted in a few days. Delegates had sent the record of the minutes far and wide

to the women of their respective republics.

"(2) An Equal Rights Treaty was presented for the first time as the quickest means of abolishing all existing inequalities before the law relating to the status of women and as a means of preventing additional ones from being written. This treaty, proposed first to the Americas, is already in the hands of European feminist groups and will be presented for acceptance to other international bodies of plenipotentiaries.

"(3) The Pan-American Conference passed unanimously a resolution creating a Committee of women to study their own status in the Americas, this Committee empowered to report recommendations to improve their status, to the next Pan-American Conference to be held in 1933 at Montevideo, Uruguay. Again this is the first time in the history of international procedure that women have been welcomed as authorities on their own status.

"All of these things mark a definite beginning of the participation of women in all future international bodies. It was indeed a brilliant beginning in international feminism on this continent.

"It was to be expected that women of the United States, with their new political power, would be the first to initiate international action on behalf of all the women of the Americas. Also it was not astonishing that the men of this continent, all more or

less recent winners of their own independence, should be responsive to the aspirations of their women toward greater liberty.

"Every organization of Cuban women co-operated with the North American Committee on International Action to make the work a success. Their eagerness to join with the women of North America in this enterprise was moving to a degree.

"Three new Cuban members of the National Woman's Party International Advisory Council were invited to join, and accepted membership on the Council. They are Dr. Julia Martinez, distinguished educator, called the Jane Addams of Cuba; Señora Luisa Baralt, the first woman to take a Ph.D. degree at the Havana University, wife of Dr. Baralt, former Cuban Minister to Peru and scholar of distinction; Señora Maria Montalvo de Soto Navarro, President of the Federated Women's Club of Cuba, descended from Spanish nobles on one side and Cuban revolutionaries on the other, beloved of the whole community for her social service to Cuba. Mrs. Pilar Lluy Houston who has been on the International Advisory Council for some time is the fourth member from Cuba. These women are all above factional and partisan politics in their own country. They are all ardent and devoted feminists.

The North American women were gratified to see formed in Cuba as a result of their intensive six weeks' joint campaign on the Conference, a Federated Committee composed of representatives of every woman's club and organization in Cuba, under the Presidency of Señora de Soto Navarro to redouble their efforts on behalf of equality of Cuban women before the law. The Cuban women were inspired to return to the next Pan-American Conference with full power, and there is every likelihood that they will."

It is announced that a public dinner will shortly be given in Washington by the National Woman's Party in honour of a number of Latin-American delegates to the Pan-American Conference who, in Havana, declared themselves friends of the movement for Equal Rights for the women of the Americas.

Miss Muma Lee begins her report on the work of the National Women's Party at the Pan-American Conference with the words:

"Within walls as impregnable as those of Jericho, Pan-American Congresses entrench themselves for their session. Urgencies and innovations and every manner of disturbance are outside the smooth enclosing walls. A new idea, a new demand, any voice asking admittance, would seem a vain cry in the wilderness. But in Havana, as at Jericho, the clangor of tireless marching trumpeters can shake even the towering strength of stony walls."

And she concludes her report as follows:

"The committee's work with the Pan-American Conference did not result, as they asked, in action on their rights. It did, however, give women the right to recommend what they wanted to the next conference before any more international agreements should be written through this body without the consent of women.

The Committee has every reason to feel that the impregnable walls of Jericho trembled and toppled a little."

We offer our hearty congratulations to the National Woman's Party on the work accomplished at Havana.

The Pan American Governing Board has appointed by lot the following seven countries which shall appoint representatives on the women's committee to study the status of women: Argentina; Colombia; Haiti; Panama; Salvador; United States; Venezuela.

Miss Doris Stevens, chairman of the Committee on International Action of the National Woman's Party was appointed Chairman of the Pan American Women's Committee.

PAPER SELLING.

We are grateful to Miss Barry, Mrs. Dean, Miss Fedden, Miss Gorry, Mrs. and Miss Kerr, Miss Lucking and Mrs. Saint George for their splendid help in paper-selling at Tyburn on April 29. Before the procession arrived every paper had been sold. Our thanks are also due to Mrs. Anton, Mrs. Laughton Mathews, Misses Hynes, O'Connell, E. O'Connor and Stammers for paper selling in various parts of London.

Notes and Comments.

The Equal Franchise Bill has passed its committee stage practically intact. The amendment to raise the voting age of both sexes to 25 was defeated by 359 to 16 votes. The expenditure of candidates in County Constituencies will in future be restricted to 6d. per voter, instead of 7d., and 5d. will remain the maximum in boroughs. The Third Reading passed without a division. We have every hope that the Bill will reach the Statute Book in safety. Until it does however, we shall not feel secure. Past history has warned us to be on our guard.

We congratulate our member, Dr. Eileen M. Hickey, who has been appointed Clinical Examiner of Medicine, for the present year at Queen's University, Belfast. This is the first time in the history of the University that a woman has occupied this post.

We offer our sincere sympathy to South African Suffragists, on the loss of their staunch champion, Dr. Jane B. Henderson Ruthven, President of the Women's Enfranchisement League, who died in March. Our members will remember that she and her sister were our guests at one of our dinners at the Rendezvous last year.

The Ministry of Health announces that a representative Maternal Mortality Committee is to be set up at the Ministry. The Committee will consider means of investigating the actual causes of the high rate of maternal deaths, and methods of prevention. It will be somewhat on the lines of the Cancer Committee. This, no doubt, is the result of the Queen's recent appeal for concerted action to reduce the continued high rate of maternal Mortality.

It is reported that some months will pass before the Committee, set up by the Senate of the University of London, to enquire into

the banning of women medical students by certain hospitals, will be able to publish the result of their enquiry. Meanwhile the controversy continues, and we feel confident that the hospitals will stand convicted by public opinion of banning women for the sole reason that men fear their competition.

Under Mr. Churchill's new Budget parents will find considerable relief. Income Tax relief for children is altered from £36 for first child and £27 for each subsequent child, to £60 first child and £50 for each subsequent child, with increased relief for the year of birth of child. Mr. Churchill alluded to this relief as: "another application of our general policy of helping the producer." This is a statesmanlike act, and surely better than advocating a limitation of families.

The Edinburgh Corporation Bill came up for second reading on April 19, and was rejected by 156 votes to 93. This is a great victory, and we congratulate the opponents of the Bill who put their case so ably: Mr. Pethick Lawrence, Dr. Graham Little, Lady Astor, Mr. E. Brown, Dr. Salter and others.

We ask the prayers of our readers for the repose of the soul of Miss O'Halloran, one of our earliest members, and of Miss Teresa Westlake, sister of our members the Misses Westlake. R.I.P.

FINANCE.

Both the dance organised by Mrs. Kerr and the Bridge party organised by Mrs. Huggest were most successful. As a result £6 4s., and £1 15s., respectively, were handed over to the Treasurer. Our best thanks are due to both these members and all those who helped. Mrs. Kerr is organising another dance at St. Osmund's Hall, 77 Castelnau, Barnes, on Friday, May 18, from 7-30 to 11. Tickets 2s. each from the office. Buses 9, 33 and 73 pass the door.

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE,

AND

Editorial Office of "Catholic Citizen":

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

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

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Restrictive Legislation and the Industrial Woman Worker.

We recommend all our readers whether they are for or against special restrictive legislation for women, to buy and to study this pamphlet, which can be procured from our office, 55 Berner's Street, W. 1., for the sum of 2d. It is the Open Door Council's reply, an admirable and lucid rejoinder to the statement of the Joint Committee of Women's Industrial Organisations. The Joint Committee favours special legislation for women, and has been driven to issue the statement; "because of the attempts of certain feminist organisations to oppose Protective Legislation for women on the ground that it is restrictive and injurious."

"The Committee does not speak only for women who are themselves in industrial employment. It speaks also for the mothers of such workers." Obviously a formidable opponent this Committee, so formidable that some of the more timid among us, might be tempted to wonder whether the feminist position is, after all, right. We beg any doubters to get this pamphlet, and we feel sure their doubts will vanish. Take for instance the Joint Committee's definite statement that the prohibition of night work "has certainly not been injurious to women, and it has been an influence towards its prohibition." Here is a statement more easily checked than some others. We quoted in the last issue of the *Catholic Citizen*, the

case of women employed in night work in rural electrification, by Messrs. Partridge, who now find that they are breaking the law. The Open Door Council in their reply state that in every country, displacements have caused great hardship, and proceed to quote the following instances:

NIGHT WORK.

We know of no greater injury to a wage-earner than the loss of work and wages. That injury was imposed on many women in this country by the night work enactments from 1844 onwards. The ban originally came into force when little heed was paid to the rights of the non-citizen wage-earning woman, with the consequence that displacements were taken little account of. But in every country displacements have caused great hardship. We quote some modern instances.

International Conference of Trade Union Women, Paris, 1927. Mrs. Wisborg, Sweden, Women Workers' Delegate, opposing "protective" legislation, stated that a whole class of well-paid women in the printing trade had been driven out of the printing trade completely.

Lockwood Transportation Law, New York, 1921 (limits hours and prohibits overtime and night work for women). Every woman employed on the night shift was turned out of work. Preference on the day shift is now given to men, as they are unhampered by this law.

Samnis Elevator Law, New York, 1921 (limits hours and prohibits overtime and night work for women). Every woman employed on the night shift was turned out of work. Preference on the day shift is now given to men, as they are unhampered by this law.

New York State Labour Law (1913) (since amended) and *Women Printers* (prohibited night

work for women printers). A three-shift system was worked. Men worked on any shift. Women cleaners of cuspidors and floors—heavy low-paid work—worked on any shift. Women printers—skilled work carrying good pay—worked only on the day shift, *the lowest paid shift*.

It is not the prohibition of night work for women, but necessity for the equalisation and standardisation of hours throughout industry for economic and organization purposes, which is the chief factor in the diminution of night work. That diminution is on the whole retarded rather than advanced by the present arbitrary sex discrimination. The so-called "protection" of women acts as a sop to the public conscience. Where there is an obvious economic advantage to men this tends to check their strong or spontaneous demand for equal legislation.

Dealing with the question of lead poisoning, and the "medical belief that women are more subject to lead poisoning than men," the O.D.C. proceeds to show that there is no real evidence for this belief. The Home Secretary admitted in the House of Commons, July 21, 1927, that the Home Office made no inquiry as to the health and conditions of women doing painting work, but of this the House was ignorant when the Lead Paint (Protection against Poisoning) Act, was passed in 1926. "This Act protects men. It does not protect women. It prohibits their future apprenticeship and employment."

This, then, is the kind of protection to which feminists take exception, they believe in real protection for all workers, they denounce the "protection" which handicaps women in earning a livelihood, or turns them out of their jobs, under the guise of doing them a service.

L. de Alberti.

MEETINGS.

On Monday, June 4, at 6 p.m., Commandant Allen of the Women's Auxiliary Service, will speak on "Women's Police." This will be the next of our regular monthly meetings held at St. Patrick's Club Room, Soho Square, on the first Monday of the month. Tea may be had at 5-30.

As this month we go to press several days earlier, we are obliged to hold over the account of our Josephine Butler meeting on May 7, addressed by Lady Balfour of Burleigh, and Mr. A. S. G. Butler, grandson of Josephine Butler.

The preliminary meeting on the aims and objects of the Alliance addressed by Miss Fedden on April 23, was successful in securing some new members. Dr. Ude also spoke at this meeting.

Josephine Butler Centenary.

St. Joan's S.P.A. took part in the mass meeting of Commemoration of Josephine Butler, held in the Central Hall, Westminster, Wednesday, April 25. Eloquent speeches were made by the chairman, Lord Balfour of Burleigh, Sir Michael Sadler, Master of University College, Oxford, Mrs. Bramwell Booth, and Miss Margaret Bondfield, M.P. The resolution professing admiration of and gratitude for Josephine Butler's work, was moved by Revd. Dr. Ude, Professor of Philosophy, Graz University, and President of the Austrian Branch of the International Abolitionist Federation. It was seconded by Miss Alison Neilans, of the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, one of the chief exponents in this country, of Josephine Butler's work. It was a vast and enthusiastic meeting.

In connection with the centenary celebrations, St. Joan's S.P.A. entertained Dr. Ude and Father Meyer, delegates from Austria, to dinner at the Rendez-Vous on April 23. Miss Douglas Irvine presiding, spoke of Dr. Ude's great work in the abolitionist movement. Dr. Ude in an interesting speech spoke of the position in Austria as regards State Regulation of Vice, and of his great admiration of the pioneer and leader in the movement—Josephine Butler. Dr. Ude expressed his fervent wish that Christians of all denomination should co-operate in the social and moral reform of the world, taking as basis the Decalogue, the Lord's Prayer and the Sermon on the Mount, and make conditions of life worthy of human beings.

Miss Whately gave some of her experiences when visiting the occupied areas in Germany, and spoke of the moral conditions prevailing there. We had also the pleasure of entertaining Monsieur Delamare from France.

International Notes.

Two Reuter telegrams in the daily press, report from Ottawa that the Supreme Court of Canada, has unanimously decided that women are not eligible to the Canadian Senate, and that, following on this decision, the Government of Canada has announced, on the 24th of April, that it favours the inclusion of women in the Senate, and intends to ask for such an alteration of the British North America Act as would allow their admission. The reference to the supreme court was made on the application of a number of prominent women in Canada.

Stri-Dharma (Madras), prints the memorial which was read by the Rani Saheb of Mandi when a deputation from the Second All-India Women's Conference of Educational Reform was received by the Viceroy on the 11th of February. It embodied a resolution in which the Conference "deeply deploras the effect of early marriage on education. It emphatically condemns the custom of allowing immature boys and girls to become parents. It calls on the Central Government and the Provincial Legislatures to follow the precedent set up by the Indian States of Baroda, Rajkot, Kashmir, Gondal, Indore, Limbdi, Mandi, which have raised the legal age of marriage. This meeting demands that the legal age of marriage for girls and boys be made 16 and 21 respectively. While welcoming Rai Sahib Harbilas Sarda's attempt to pass legislation prohibiting early marriage, this Conference strongly protests against his proposed ages of 12 and 15, and calls on him and the Select Committee to amend his Bill in conformity with this Resolution. It reiterates its demand of last year to raise the Age of Consent to 16 for girls, and supports Sir Hari Singh Gour's Bill as a step towards that end."

From *La Française* (Paris), we learn that four French feminist associations, the *Union pour le Suffrage*, the *Ligue pour le Droit des Femmes*, the *Union Fraternelle* and the *Amélioration du sort de la Femme*, ran Monsieur Seymour de Ricci as a feminist candidate for the Chamber of Deputies in the Paris constituency of the Quartier des Ecoles. The organised feminists have been active as never before during this general election in France.

We read with pleasure in *Correspondance internationale* (Paris), the organ of the Bureau d'Etudes et d'Informations féminines,

a comment disapproving of the suggestion that married women in the canton of Vaud in Switzerland should be deprived of their right to work for pay.

Le Féminisme Chrétien (Brussels) publishes an interesting detailed and critical exposition of the law passed in the Belgian parliament on 20, March 1927, further to regulate the separation of married persons.

A new monthly review, *La Femme Polonaise*, has appeared in Warsaw. We congratulate all concerned on the first number, which includes articles on the campaign against prostitution, and on women police in Poland.

We hear from *La Lutlle de la Femme* (Athens), that on the 18th March, the first public feminist demonstration took place in Greece. It was supported by 54 various women's organisations. Resolutions were adopted in favour of political equality between women and men, and of granting the municipal vote to women.

H. D. I.

Reviews.

SIGN POST SERIES. No. 1. Civic Health and Welfare. By Annie R. Caton and Marian Berry. (P. S. King & Son, Ltd., 2s. 6d.)

This is the first volume of a series initiated by the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship. Miss Rathbone in her Introduction says that the N.U.S.E.C. have initiated the series, because they have found that many women keenly interested in the problems of local government and anxious to promote reforms, are baffled by lack of knowledge of what can reasonably be expected and is perhaps done elsewhere. The book deals with Maternity and Child Welfare, housing, sanitation, infectious disease, humane slaughter, parks and open spaces, public libraries and museums. The last section deals with the status of Women in Local Government Service. The book is full of useful information. Its attitude to Birth Control, with which it deals briefly, is much the same as that of the N.U.S.E.C. Of this

Miss Rathbone repeats that her union, "without expressing any opinion as to the rights or wrongs of the practice in itself, is advocating the removal of the present rule of the Ministry of Health which prohibits giving of such information at maternity clinics under its control, etc., etc." It is surely a strange attitude to press the State to give information upon a subject, which may be right or may be wrong. Catholics, of course, say it is definitely wrong.

L. A.

SOCIAL INSURANCE. By Evelyn Martelli. P. S. King and Son., 2s. 6d.

This is the second volume of the Sign Post Series. It gives a summary of social insurance, as it stands to-day, and makes various suggestions to remedy the defects noted. The book gives special attention to the treatment of women under the Acts, and to quote Miss Rathbone's introduction, finds no adequate justification for the practice of treating women as a separate group of workers. Differential rates of contribution and benefit if necessary should logically be based on the rate of remuneration, and not on the sex of the worker. It appears that the insurance experts connected with the International Labour Office regard the British system of a flat rate—different for men, women and juveniles—as a blot on the British system. Great Britain stands almost alone in this respect, and experience in other countries shows that a graded system is quite practicable. The question is of considerable interest. We give below an account of a deputation on the subject.

L. A.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH.
Hon. Secretary: Miss N. S. Parnell, B.A.,
45 Falkner Street, Liverpool.

The Committee considered it advisable to abandon the proposed meeting in Fairfield on April 26, on account of the Josephine Butler Centenary Celebrations the same week. Mrs. and Miss Parnell represented the Branch at the reception given by the Lord Mayor to the foreign delegates, and the great majority of our members attended the splendid meeting at the Philharmonic Hall on April 27, when Dame Rachel Crowdy, Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., and Dr. Ude, were the principal speakers.

The Hon. Secretary is to speak in Birmingham on June 5, at a meeting of the Catholic Women's League presided over by Archbishop Mackintyre.

She has also been asked to address the Council and delegates the next day on some current topic of interest to Catholic women.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS.

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TREASURER'S NOTE.

There are still some annual subscriptions outstanding, which we shall be glad to receive as soon as possible. Elsewhere we give the proceeds of Mrs. Kerr's dance and Mrs. Huggett's bridge party, both very successful and enjoyable events. We are particularly grateful to these members for taking charge of them and thus saving our Hon. Secretary's time for other work.

G. JEFFERY.

DEPUTATION TO MINISTER OF HEALTH ON NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE BILL.

A deputation organised by the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship on the National Health Insurance Bill, was received by the Minister of Health, accompanied by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry and Sir Walter Kinnear, in the House of Commons on April 17th. The deputation, which was led by Miss Rathbone, put forward the demand for: (1) allowances and medical benefits for dependants of insured persons; (2) an improved statutory maternity benefit; (3) the treatment of married women on the same basis as men; the grading of contributions and benefits according to wages. Miss Gertrude Tuckwell put forward a plea for an improved maternity benefit on behalf of the Maternity Mortality Committee. The Minister of Health stated that owing to financial exigencies it was not possible in this bill to provide for dependants' allowances, although he agreed they would be a valuable extension. Though he was looking forward to a time when the medical services should be organised on a better basis, he considered that on financial and other grounds, medical benefits for dependants could not be provided at present. He explained that while fully aware of the gravity of the problem of maternal mortality, the causes of which the Ministry of Health was doing all in its power to investigate, it was not possible to consider what alterations in the present maternity benefit ought, when money is available, to be made, until more knowledge had been gained. With regard to the substitution of a graded for a flat rate, he pointed out that the latter had probably been originally selected because voluntary insurance was already well established. The position in this country was therefore different from that in foreign countries where graded schemes had been adopted.

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55 Berners Street, W.1.

OPEN MEETINGS

At ST. PATRICK'S CLUB ROOM, SOHO SQUARE.
(Entrance in Porch of Church).

Monday, June 4th, at 6 p.m., on "WOMEN POLICE"
Speaker: COMMANDANT ALLEN, O.B.E.
[Women's Auxiliary Service].

Chairman: MRS. LAUGHTON MATHEWS, M.B.E.

Monday, July 2, at 6 p.m., on
"Restrictive Legislation & the Wage-earning Woman."

Speaker: Mrs. ELIZABETH ABBOTT (Open-Door Council).

Chairman: Miss MONICA WHATELY.

ADMISSION FREE. Tea may be had before and after the Meeting.

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First "Suffragette" Lecture, "Mary Wollstone-Craft," by Miss EVELYN SHARP. Monday, 21st May, 8 p.m., at Essex Hall. Tickets—Dinner 5/-. Lecture 1/-, 2/6, and free—from Mrs. HOW-MARTYN, 38 Hogarth Hill, N.W.11.

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