

WOMEN'S SERVICE

FILE COPY

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.

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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.

The Catholic View on Sterilisation.

BY THE REV. VINCENT McNABB, O.P.

Ambiguity often lurks in the word "Sterilisation." Sometimes it is taken to mean "the destruction or obstruction of an organ necessary for procreation." We have heard not unintelligent doctors argue that the Catholic Church allows sterilisation because in order to prevent the spread of a disease it allows a procreative organ to be removed. But this would be to argue that the State as well as the Church allows murder because it allows capital punishment.

Sterilisation, as it is now taken by Eugenists and others, means "the destruction or obstruction of an organ necessary for procreation, with the purpose of preventing procreation."

It is not usually realised that procreation can be avoided by other means than by mutilation of the procreative organs. The many millions of unwed adults must surely include a vast number of adult men and women who are avoiding procreation otherwise than by sterilisation. Unwedded, like wedded, chastity makes its demands upon self-control; yet these demands are not impossible.

But the one element in "Sterilisation" as a preventive, differentiating it from the other preventive of sexual control, is its sexual pleasure; that is, its sexual uncontrol. The sexual act, as such, has one main purpose, the altruistic begetting of a human life. To this altruistic act Nature—or as Catholics would say, God—has attached a pleasure which cannot be sought for its own sake, because the

pleasure is for the act, and not the act for the pleasure.

Voluntary Sterilisation

For this reason no individual can deliberately effect or permit his own sterilisation. Hence all proposals for civilly legalising "Voluntary Sterilisation," are morally wrong, except in so far as "legalising" may merely mean the refusal by the civil law to inflict any punishment on the perpetrators of voluntary sterilisation. In this way many morally wrong acts, i.e., fornication, are not punishable by civil law, and may therefore be said to be legalised.

Compulsory Sterilisation

(1) Moreover, what is, in this case, morally wrong for the individual is also morally wrong for the community. Compulsory sterilisation is no less morally wrong than is voluntary sterilisation.

The community of course can punish crime even by the extremity of death. Lesser punishment, i.e., imprisonment or even the amputation of a bodily member is therefore permissible. But punishment can be inflicted only for crime and not for defect.

(2) Strangely enough there is no proposal to inflict sterilisation as a punishment for crime; not even for anti-social crime. To illustrate. In almost all healthy primitive peoples adultery has been looked upon as such an anti-social crime that it has been punishable by death. Indeed in some communities the husband of an adulteress could

kill her and her accomplice at sight. Yet now-a-days even in those countries where there is the loudest demand for the sterilisation of the innocent, there is no proposal to inflict the like penalty on crime. But perhaps adultery has ceased to be a crime; and has become a modern form of self-expression. At any rate the people of this country have heard judges on the Bench condemn the innocent woman because she would not connive at the continued adultery of her husband.

(3) Any proposal to inflict sterilisation on the mentally deficient would run counter to the principles of natural equity and the traditions of English Law. (a) What is more embedded in English Law than the tradition that no one shall suffer hurt to life or liberty, except for crime? Yet to punish the mentally deficient whilst leaving adulterers untouched would be the denial of English Law's oldest tradition.

(b) Moreover, Sterilisation, if we except penalty of death or life-imprisonment is the greatest punishment that can be inflicted. Yet the criminal is to escape; and only the innocent punished.

(c) Moreover, a principle of natural equity—and a tradition of English Law is that punishment shall not be inflicted for a probability but only for a proved certainty. Now even the Eugenic Society when pleading for the legislation of voluntary sterilisation can say only this:—"It is *probable* then that Sterilisation of certifiable defectives in the social Problem Group should produce a larger reduction in the incidence of mental deficiency than is admitted possible by some of the authorities on the subject, who deal mainly with institutional cases."

(Letter to *The Times*, 23rd July, 1932.)

(d) Again where there is a public hurt or nuisance, English Law insists that the offender shall cure the cause rather than cure the effect. Thus if a factory is giving out fumes that cause tuberculosis the law will insist that the factory owner shall prevent the fumes rather than build a sanatorium.

Now if we are to believe the proposers of Sterilisation, mental deficiency is largely on the increase in the human race. Yet the human race seems to have been in existence for so many centuries that, according to the proposers' laws of increase, the human race should be dominantly defective.

If, however, this increase in the incidence of mental deficiency is a new fact, English Law,

if faithful to its traditions, would insist that this new fact must be traceable to a new factor. When this new factor is found it must be prevented as the only legal means of dealing with the new fact.

To sum up. Both Voluntary and Compulsory Sterilisation are not permitted by the Moral Law.

But Compulsory Sterilisation of the mentally deficient is not only against the moral law, but against the best traditions of English Law.

International Notes.

Uruguay. The International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship reports a Suffrage victory of the first importance: the women of Uruguay have been granted suffrage and eligibility. The law, which has, we understand, been passed by both Houses of Parliament and has received the assent of the Ruling Power, is dated December 14th, 1932. It states that women have the right to vote and eligibility both for parliamentary and municipal elections, and that all dispositions of the electoral laws now in force shall henceforth apply to women. Electoral lists will be open both for men and women from the 1st March to the 30th June, and women will take part in the next elections in November 1933. Congratulations to the women of Uruguay, and especially to the Alliance's affiliated Society, the Alianza Uruguaya para Suffragio Feminino, and its distinguished President, Dr. Paulina Luisi, the great pioneer of the suffrage movement. The victory has been expected.

U.S.A. At the close of last year the women civil servants of the U.S.A. attained equality with men as regard eligibility in the Government civil service. By revoking a civil service rule, President Hoover has prevented the separate classification of men and women for civil service vacancies. Miss J. Dell, a member of the Civil Service Commission declared this to be the most wonderful Christmas gift that has come to women in the last half century. She anticipates an increase of women in Federal employ, especially in administrative, scientific and technical posts.

(Continued on Page 14).

Notes and Comments.

We remind our readers of the Annual Meeting of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, which is to be held on Saturday, March 11th, at 4-30 p.m. (tea at 3-45 p.m.) at St. Patrick's Club Room, Soho Square.

We urge all our members to make a special effort to attend the meeting. It is wholesome both for the committee and members to meet and discuss future and past events.

Mrs. Laughton Mathews, M.B.E., will preside, and the speakers will be:

Mrs. Garrard.
Mrs. Hand.
Mrs. Stewart Mason, B.A.
Miss Eleanor O'Connor.
Miss Nancy Stewart Parnell, B.A.
Miss Christine Spender.
Miss H. R. Walmesley, L.L.A.
and others.

The International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship, to which St. Joan's S.P.A. is affiliated, will hold a special Conference of representatives of its affiliated societies in Marseilles, March 18th—22nd to discuss urgent questions of future policy. There will also be Conferences and Evening Meetings open to the public, and special visits to neighbouring towns, such as Avignon, Nimes, Toulon and Nice are being planned. All visitors will be welcomed and many may find a visit to the South of France a tempting prospect. All information may be obtained from Alliance Headquarters in London, or for local information enquiries may be addressed to Mme. L. Beddoukh, Organiser for the Conference, Splendide Hotel, Bd. Dugomier, Marseilles, the seat of the Conference and of the Secretariat.

St. Joan's S.P.A. will be represented by Mrs. Laughton Mathews and Mlle. Lenoël. Mrs. Mathews will be one of the speakers at the Public Meeting on Suffrage, to be held in Marseilles on Sunday, March 19th.

We offer our cordial congratulations to our member, Miss D. J. Collier, on her admission as a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons.

Miss Ishbel MacDonald, Miss Megan Lloyd George, M.P., and the Hon. Dorothy Pickford, M.P., have been appointed to the Post Office Advisory Council, set up by the Postmaster-General, to act in a consultative capacity on Post Office policy, and serve as a

connecting link with the public. There are sixteen men on the Council.

We welcome the new Catholic monthly, "The Catholic Nurse" (price 3d.), organ of the Catholic Nurses Guild. The first number contains an article on the Hospital of St. John and St. Elizabeth, first of a series on the Catholic Hospitals of Great Britain. Mrs. Belloc Lowndes contributes an article, "Do you want to Write?" and another feature is an article on the "Blue Nuns" of Rome who recently nursed H. E. Cardinal Bourne through his serious illness. We wish the new publication a fair journey.

OBITUARY

It is with deep regret that we have to record the death of our member, Mrs. Christitch. (R.I.P.) In the very early days, and since, Mrs. Christitch was a strong supporter of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, now St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance. Her pamphlet "A Word on Woman Suffrage" was a great help in our propaganda. We mourn the loss of a friend. To her daughters, Miss Annie Christitch, and Mother Mary of the Cross, (Tyburn Convent) we offer our deep sympathy.

We offer our deep sympathy to our member, Miss Havers, on the death of her brother, and ask prayers for the repose of his soul.—R.I.P.

We also ask the prayers of our readers for Dominica Westlake, R.I.P., and offer our deep sympathy to her sister, Miss Margaret Westlake.

We regret to record the death of the Duchess D'Uzès, a splendid feminist to whom women owe much. R.I.P.

WOMEN AND UNEMPLOYMENT

St. Joan's Alliance was represented by Dr. Shattock and Mrs. O'Connor on the deputation of women's organisations which was received at the Ministry of Labour last week.

The deputation urged that unemployment insurance contributions and benefits should be the same for women as for men, and for girls as for boys; that there should be no differentiation of treatment for married women; that the recommendations in the Report of the Royal Commission on Unemployment Insurance which involved differentiation of treatment should not be implemented; and that any international convention on unemployment insurance should be equal for both sexes.

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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Unemployment Insurance.

The Royal Commission on Unemployment Insurance issued its Report at the close of last year, and the subject will shortly come before Parliament. The Commissioners make proposals for treating women, more especially married women, differently to men. There is nothing new in this, because a certain differentiation has been made since the initiation of the insurance scheme, but it is to be regretted that the Commission should approve of it. It must be remembered that unemployment insurance is not a voluntary system, every worker receiving less in wages than a certain sum is compelled to insure against unemployment. A woman pays a little less than a man, but the man receives a great deal more in proportion than a woman.

Unemployment Insurance being an integral part of the wage system of the country, it is time that all women workers should make certain the country is not cheating them.

The Open Door Council, in their admirable Commentary on the proposals to differentiate between men and women, points out that the Unemployment Insurance Scheme can be used either as helping to raise the present low status of the woman earner, or as a gigantic engine for standardising her position as the badly-paid worker. The lower benefits and lower contributions of the woman worker encourage the employer, the male worker, the Employment Exchange Official, and even the woman herself, to think that the less well-paid job is "suitable employment" for her, and are thus an important factor in preventing the woman improving her status and insisting on better pay.

In any moment of financial crisis when economy is the Government's chief aim, it is women who suffer first, and suffer most. "The

unemployment of women on the whole presents less serious personal problems than the unemployment of men," says the Majority Report.

It is this optimistic frame of mind we suppose, that causes married women to be the scapegoats where earning a livelihood is concerned, and great injury has been done them again by the Anomalies Act.

Before a married woman can claim benefit certain special conditions are laid down:

A married woman, unless her husband is incapacitated from work, or unemployed and not in receipt of benefit must, in addition to satisfying the conditions required from other workers, show:

either that she has paid 15 contributions since marriage and, when she has been married more than six months, show in addition 8 contributions in the three months before the benefit quarter; or she must prove

(i) that she is normally employed in insurable employment; and that she will normally seek to obtain her livelihood by means of insurable employment:

(ii) having regard to all the circumstances of her case and particularly to her industrial experience and the industrial circumstances of the district in which she resides, she can reasonably expect to obtain insurable employment in that district (p. 469, Min. Rep. par. 192).

And yet a married woman was recently found dead of starvation, having deprived herself of food that her children might not go hungry. And in the same week a deserted wife stated at

the inquest on her child, aged 3½ years, who died of burns, that she lived on 10s. or 12s. a week, sent her by her mother, and had to pay 7s. rent. Many thousands of women must be in a like condition.

The O.D.C. in their Memorandum state that the lowering of the status of the married women under the Anomalies Act has been the worst blow struck at her since under the Married Woman's Property Acts she was given the capacity of entering a contract of employment and having control of her own earnings.

The Majority Report recommends the partial removal of the discrimination against married women under the Anomalies Act. The signatories of the Minority Report have a wider vision and state: "Any regulations which penalise marriage tend to be a social danger, and women are tempted to conceal the fact that they are married when they realise that this may prevent their drawing benefit, however anxious they are to work. In equity married women should be subjected to the same rules and regulations as any other insured contributors and not special conditions applying to them alone."

Both justice and common sense demand that this advice of the Minority Report should be accepted.

St. Joan's S.P.A. urges that the following principles shall be embodied in the forthcoming Insurance Bill:

(1) That contributions and benefits in any new insurance scheme shall be the same for women as for men.

(2) That the conditions as to the receipt of benefits shall be the same for women as for men; and more especially that there shall be no discrimination against married women as such.

Many societies put forward the same demand.

L. DE ALBERTI.

The latest attack on a married woman's right to work comes from the Worcester Chamber of Commerce, which proposes that employers should adopt as a general principle that wives of men in work should not be engaged in jobs which can be done equally well by men or unmarried women out of work. This proposal concerned the clothing industry. A letter to this effect was sent to the Leeds Chamber of Commerce, but was not received with favour. The head of one of the largest clothing firms in Leeds said that the industry could not entertain such a proposal. The percentage of women employed in the clothing trade in Leeds

was between 85 and 90. It was agreed to take no action. We hope that other Chambers of Commerce will follow Leeds and refuse to rob Peter to pay Paul.

NATIONAL UNION OF WOMEN TEACHERS

The N.U.W.T. asks for consideration of a matter which is causing serious misgiving in the minds of its members—the limitation of training in Domestic Science for Girls to the provision and service of dinners for necessitous children.

It is recognised that the provision of these meals is an urgency which should be undertaken as a serious social duty and that such service should be efficient and should provide varied and ample menus, with amenities which maintain a desirable tone and atmosphere while the meal is being served.

But the question at issue is "Should School Girls be required to provide this Service as part of their Curriculum Work?" We beg to submit a negative answer to the question for the following reasons:

1. Domestic Science or rather Housecraft is not really a science; it is a craft in which numerous scientific principles are applied. The scope of this work increases widely as progressive equipment becomes available.
2. The application of these varied and ever expanding principles must be taught as either Cookery or Laundry or Housewifery or all three by means of varied exercises arranged with a definite teaching end in view; the repetition of a process daily such as potato-peeling does not serve the end for which the school equipment is provided. . .

We suggest that the provision of meals on so large a scale is work for which skilled labour should be employed and that there is a supply of such labour to be found among the numbers of workers now out of employment. . .

The position can well be illustrated by a parallel demand that boys should be required, as part of the routine course of the workshop, to undertake house or boot repairs for these necessitous cases. We venture to think that such a demand would be resisted by the instructors, who would realise the consequent limitation of the teaching value of this work, and by the general public, who would require such work to be done by experienced workmen.

The Memorandum gives other reasons why this service should not be placed on the teachers and girls.

Review.

THE PERSECUTION OF MARY STEWART.

The Queen's Cause: A Study in Criminology.
By His Honour Sir Edward Parry. (Cassell,
2rs. net.)

The books written on Mary, Queen of Scots, would fill a library, and still she attracts writers who are eager to bring this tragic figure before a new audience in a new light. Judge Parry deals with the Queen's cause from a judicial point of view; she was never put on trial, the evidence against her comes to us from her enemies. After her death in 1587, a tradition arose in Scotland among the common people, "that the martyred Queen of Scots was a good, kind-hearted, honest and beautiful woman, who had been basely treated by Scotch traitors in English pay. Now that the history of the time is rightly known, this seems to be based on fact." Sir Edward Parry deals with the stories broadcast by Knox and Buchanan to defame her, stories received by many as historical; but with the opening of archives, here and in other countries, new light was thrown on the persecution of Queen Mary. The Queen's cause may be entitled *Regina v. Moray, Morton and Maitland*. The charges against the prisoners are treason, murder and forgery; but separate bills of indictment should be presented for theft and conspiracy.

It is in a noble thirst for justice that Judge Parry pleads for a hearing of the Queen's Cause, and with his knowledge of Law demonstrates how little she could have been responsible for plots and intrigues attributed to her.

He goes carefully into such facts as are known concerning Darnley's murder, exonerates the Queen from any share in it, and while agreeing that what exactly happened, and why it happened, must remain a mystery, brings the case to modern times by his statement: "But from a police point of view in an efficient civilised state, the persons that the detectives would have kept their eyes upon would have been Moray, Morton and Maitland, who had run the Riccio murder. They would also have looked up the dossier of James Balfour and Archbishop Hamilton, and would certainly have tried to find out why Bothwell was now hand in glove with his old enemy Moray."

Again, whether the abduction of Mary by Bothwell was a rape or whether it was a simulated marriage by capture arranged with

Mary's good will must remain a matter of dispute, but the judge finds that the weight of evidence is in favour of the former.

This briefly is the matter of Sir Edward Parry's book; he has weighed all known facts, and his verdict is—The Queen's Cause has not been heard.

Coming from a distinguished judge the verdict must necessarily carry much weight.

L. DE ALBERTI.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES

(Continued from Page 10).

The Association of Southern Women for the prevention of Lynching hope for a lynchless South in 1933. Last year there were only six lynchings in the U.S.A., the lowest record for fifty years.

* * * *

Berlin. From the "Korrespondenz Frauenpresse" we learn that the German Women's Organisations have approached the Minister of the Interior with the request that expert women be appointed to the Selection Committee for Radio Programmes, in consideration of the present day importance of Radio to the home and to education.

* * * *

Portugal. Alma Feminina, Lisbon, organ of the National Council of Women, devotes a recent number entirely to the advocacy of peace, reporting addresses delivered on the subject; answers to correspondents and an account of a brilliant meeting organised for the purpose.

* * * *

Spain. It is reported in the Press that the Spanish Cabinet has decided that the municipal elections to be held in April throughout Spain shall be fought on the new register. Women will be in a majority in most places.
A.A.B.

* * * *

The Open Door International for the economic Emancipation of the Woman Worker, has now issued its call to the Third Conference of the O.D.I. to be held at the Senate House, Prague, July 24th to 28th, 1933.

TREASURER'S NOTE

Our thanks are due to those who have paid their subscriptions promptly at the beginning of the new year, but we regret to say that at the present moment we have a deficit of over £30, and we must make every effort to reduce it.

We are proposing to hold more frequent Jumble Sales, and we think that if members realise that we are ready to receive goods at any time and that they need not harbour their cast off garments, but can send them to Mrs. Hand, 10 St. James Terrace, N.W.8., whenever they wish, we may receive a larger supply. If desired, sacks can be obtained from the office for this purpose, and the carriage will be paid. So we hope that all members will think of the Alliance when they are overhauling their wardrobes.

Would those who have not yet paid their subscriptions be kind enough to do so?

P. M. BRANDT.

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LIVERPOOL BRANCH

Hon. Secretary: Mrs. A. Stewart Mason, B.A., Brinsworth, 33 Grosvenor Road, Birkenhead.

The 21st Annual Meeting of the Branch was held on Monday, January 30th, when we had the great pleasure of welcoming among us both Miss Barry and Miss Nancy Stewart Parnell.

Miss Barry outlined the policy of the Alliance and Miss Parnell, moving the vote of thanks to Miss Barry, agreed that our most important work for women now lies in the economic field.

Mrs. Gordon, seconding the vote of thanks, said that she was one of the original members of the Liverpool Branch when it was founded twenty-one years ago next May. Resolutions were passed dealing with the various points on the programme of the Alliance, and these will be forwarded to the proper quarters.

Six new members were enrolled at the end of the meeting, and the Committee were re-elected with Miss Bowden in place of Miss Davies.

We hope to hold our Annual Party in aid of the funds of the Branch on February 27th, in the Gymnasium, Blue Coat Chambers, Liverpool.

JANET MASON (Hon. Sec.).

NATIONALITY OF MARRIED WOMEN

The Home Secretary has issued an Order releasing British women married to foreigners from registering as aliens with the police. This concession follows on vigorous protests such as that of Mrs. Grace Tyndall last year, and Miss Winifred James, married to an American. A small concession, but a step forward. British women are urging the Government to put their declared principles into practice, and give British women the right to retain or change their nationality on marriage with a foreigner.

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OBJECT.

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