

THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN

Organ of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, 55, Berners St., London, W.1.

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October 15th, 1920.

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.

REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON POLICE- WOMEN.

BY IVEIGH MORE NISBETT.

The perusal of the above Report is at once gratifying and disappointing to those who are interested in the establishment of women police in the country. It is gratifying, because it definitely states that there is a need for the services of policewomen, and recommends that the adoption of women into the Force should be permanent. But it is disappointing in its vagueness as to the manner in which a supply of policewomen is to be established—also, to those who have watched the gradual development of this movement from the beginning, it is equally disappointing that the Committee have not given honour where it is most due.

In the introductory part of the Report* all credit for the inauguration of women police is given to the patrols, as though that body were the pioneers, and that assumption is as unjust as it is erroneous. The late Commandant Damer Dawson, O.B.E., and her colleague Sub-Commandant Allen, O.B.E., were the first in the field. They formed and started the Women Police Service, or, as the society was first called, the Women Police Volunteers, some time before the National Council of Women introduced local patrols. When the Government called for policewomen to take charge of female workers in Munition Factories, it was to the Women Police Service they applied, with immediate response and unqualified success. And when Ireland asked for policewomen a few weeks ago it was the W.P.S. that supplied the number

required. The Women Patrols were formed of local bodies of women for local work, the members of the Women Police Service though recruited all over Great Britain, form one large association, and have been and still are employed with the Police Force in many towns in England, Scotland and Ireland.

Reading the eleven other parts of the Report, one is struck at once by the prevailing masculinity of its outlook. The conclusions drawn from the evidence are almost exclusively from the standpoint of male officials. I cannot find one word which puts forward the claim for policewomen on the ground that the women of the country want them to be employed to the advantage of their sex. During the years 1919-20 I have addressed over fifty meetings in Scotland, meetings composed for the most part of women only, and representing every class, on the Need for Policewomen; and at all these (with the exception of one, where the single dissentient was an old woman), a resolution that Women Police are necessary in the interests of women and children was carried unanimously, often with the greatest enthusiasm. Yet, from cover to cover of the charter before me I find the prevailing point of view that of a Chief Constable.

Happily for the Movement, the majority of those policewomen who were called as witnesses seem to be in favour of the adoption of policewomen, and it is satisfactory that the view of Mr. Frederick Mead, the Metropol-

* Report, Part I., paragraph 2.

itan Police Magistrate†, was not sympathised with by the Committee.

In Part III, paragraph 13, of the Charter it says:—"Mr. Mead urged that the law is in every way satisfactorily administered by the present male police; that women are unsuitable for duties which require the exercise of physical force, and that the work they can do (as shown in the Report of the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis for 1918-19), is either work which is extra to police duty proper (such as assisting the infirm and incapable across the streets), or is work that could be better carried out by philanthropic ladies not dressed in police uniform. He argued that, as the male police can and do efficiently perform all the functions for which women are said to be more suitable, and are capable of other, more strenuous work in addition, it would be doubtful economy to employ women."

It is clear from this quotation that Mr. Mead is in ignorance, not only that there is a difference between the work done by patrols, and that undertaken by trained and qualified policewomen, but also of the uses to which a policewoman can be put, and the reasons why. No doubt a policeman *can* take evidence from a little girl who has been shamefully assaulted, and so can he explain to an enquiring woman how facilities for the treatment of venereal disease may be obtained*, but the point is:—Is it desirable or seemly for a man to perform these duties and would the women of the country, who are tax-payers and voters, and have every right to press their point of view, prefer members of their own sex to be dealt with by women? This is the crux of the matter, and this strong argument in favour of policewomen is blissfully ignored by the Committee.

Passing on to paragraph 16 of Part III, it is satisfactory to note that the nature of police work for which the Committee recommend policewomen, is that for which the women themselves feel fitted. They are recommended for "The custody and escort of women and children," and for "The prevention and detection of crime." Under the latter defini-

† Report, Part III., paragraph 13.

* Report, Part III., paragraph 14.

tion, the important work of eliciting evidence, searching female prisoners, examining for v.d. &c., is included.

Again, the finding of the Committee as to the status and pay of policewomen is more or less just. (Part IV.). After enumerating the reasons for which it is essential that women should be sworn in the same as policemen, which reasons I have not space to go into here, paragraph 36 says:—"We recommend . . . that . . . such women . . . should make the declaration of a constable in the same form as the men, and that they should be vested with the legal power and status of a constable, but that regulations should be made in each force clearly defining the duties they will and will not be primarily expected to perform." This is wisely worded, as, while giving to the women the status without which they are neither safe nor effectual in the face of a jeering crowd, it safeguards them from the obligation incumbent upon their brother policeman to interfere in a street brawl.

Passing over, for lack of space, other subjects considered, such as Pay, Pensions, Hours, &c., I will conclude with a few remarks on Part V. (Control and Organisation), and Part VIII. (Recruiting and Training), which are, as I said before, disappointing to those who have the work of women police much at heart.

The desire of the great Founder of the Movement, after five years' study and experience was that a Department of women should be set up in the Home Office, into which the organisation of the Women Police Service could be merged. This Department to be controlled by a Chief Policewoman, who should issue reports of the Department periodically to the Home Secretary. It was also her desire that women police should be recruited and trained (in the first place), by members of their own sex. The Report however does not take this view. The Committee suggest that a Chief Constable, desiring to employ policewomen shall select and train the women himself†. This method is undesirable, not only because women are

† Report of the Women Police Service, 1918-19.

(Continued on page 79).

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

We are glad to be able to give our readers an expert's opinion on the Report of the Royal Commission on Women Police. Our member, Mrs. More Nisbett, is herself a sub-Inspector in the Women Police.

* * * *

We hope all our members, who possibly can, will walk behind the C.W.S.S. banner in the "Equal Pay Procession," on Saturday, November 6th. The procession is being organised by the National Union of Women Teachers, and will conclude with a Mass Meeting in Trafalgar Square. Will members please take this as the official invitation to join in the procession, which will form up in Northumberland Avenue at 2 p.m.

* * * *

Both our banners were carried by members of the C.W.S.S. in the procession on Sunday, September 19th, organised by the Guild of Our Lady of Ransom in honour of Blessed Oliver Plunkett. The intention being "for Ireland." We feel confident that none of our members whatever their views on the political aspect of the question, will forget to pray for Ireland in the terrible crisis through which she is passing.

* * * *

All suffragists, and many others, will rejoice that Mrs. Fawcett's services during the war have been recognised by the King of the Belgians, who has decorated her with the medal of La Reine Elisabeth. We offer our hearty congratulations.

* * * *

We wish every success to the new company, Atlanta, Ltd., which is to open a factory in the Midlands to be entirely staffed by women. Lady Parsons is chairman of the Company, and the directors include engineers of both sexes. Miss Hazlitt, secretary of the Women's Engineers' Society, interviewed by the *Daily News*, said that the Directors did not anticipate any difficulty in getting work. The firm had already accepted a sub-contract for machining the parts of a newly invented pump ordered by the French Government for clearing the water from the devastated areas. They are also going to make parts of hosiery needles, formerly made in Germany. The directors hope to introduce a system of co-partnership.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

Jus Suffragii (Sept.) triumphantly prints in full on its front page the text of the proclamation of the American Secretary of State finally ratifying, on August 26th, the amendment to the Constitution conferring on women the right to vote. Thus the great contest ends which has been carried on in the United States by a succession of brave women for over 80 years. Mrs. Husted Harper contributes a vivid account of the final phases of the fight shewing how up to the last legislative moment the American "antis" did their utmost to block the reform.

* * * *

On another page we read how the advent to power of Giolitti has been a great blow to the Suffrage party in Italy, as he has always been a pronounced "anti." Unfortunately also Italian Socialists are largely opposed to Women's Suffrage, doubtless because they fear the resulting increase in the Catholic vote. Hence every sort of political manoeuvre is being resorted to to prevent women being allowed to vote, as they are entitled to do, at the coming Municipal elections, and unhappily these tactics seem likely to prove successful.

* * * *

The *Bollettino* (Sept.) of the Unione Femminile Cattolica Italiana prints a letter from Cardinal Gasparri through whom the Holy Father confers various indulgences on the Association. Its educational work seems full of promise. Diocesan Social Weeks for women have been held during the summer all over the country, the principal one, at Borgo San Donnino, having been attended by over two hundred students.

* * * *

The patriotic activities of American Catholic women during the war taught them the need of organisation on a big scale; hence the formation, throughout the States, of a National Council of Catholic Women, the organisation of which on a diocesan basis has just been completed. It seems probable that a great part of its activities will be devoted to organising education for social service. (*Bulletin* of the N.C.W.C., August).

V.M.C.

THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.

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

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JURY SERVICE.

A few months ago at Bristol, when the first jury of men and women was assembled as a result of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Bill, prosecuting Council in addressing the Ladies and Gentlemen of the Jury remarked, that as it was the first occasion he had used that unfamiliar phrase—as far as he knew it had not been used before in the annals of jurisdiction of this County—he might be permitted to say a word or two of congratulation to women upon at last taking their proper place in the jurisdiction of the country. Learned Counsel was wrong in presuming that women had never served on juries in England as any reader of Mrs. Stopes' *British Freewomen* could have told him. The White Book of the City of London contains many instances of women jurors, and there are records of women serving on juries in many parts of the country. The system of being judged by his peers (which in point of fact he rarely is) is an Englishman's treasured right dating back many hundreds of years, when it replaced, so we are told, trial by ordeal. It is held to be one of the chief safeguards of the liberties of the subject, and the independence of the jury has ever been upheld, though not without a struggle. The province of the jury is limited to questions of fact proved by evidence given in the course of the trial, they may not act on personal knowledge or observation except in so far as this is derived from what is called 'a view' of the subject of litigation. Any juror acquainted with facts

which may affect the case must inform the Court, when he is dismissed and may be summoned as witness. The qualifying age both for men and women is 21 (surely absurdly young) to 65. Persons over 60 may be exempted but are not disqualified. Other persons exempt are members of the Government, judges, ministers of religion, practising barristers and solicitors, registered medical practitioners and dentists, and officers and soldiers of the regular army. Presumably mothers with young children will be added to the list, if they so desire; indeed the plea has been already admitted in the few weeks women have been serving. In England the jury must be unanimous, but the verdict of a majority may be taken if the parties consent. In Scotland the verdict of a majority suffices.

The qualification of jurors is based on property, and women are eligible on the same terms as men, those whose houses are assessed at £100 per annum being qualified as special jurors. The idea of a property qualification seems to have been, at least in early times, the relief of the poorer classes, who felt the burden of attending the courts. Indeed jury service is not a right which one demands, it is a duty accompanying the privileges of citizenship. There are many cases in which it should be easier for a mixed jury to arrive at an equitable decision than for a jury of men only, and that the ability of women to serve on juries has been at last admitted is a gain to the cause of justice.

L. DE ALBERTI.

(Continued from page 76).

better judges of women than men are, and are therefore more likely to recruit wisely, but also because the traditions of the Women Police, laid down by their leaders, Commandant Damer Dawson and Sub-Commandant Allen, can only be handed down to the police-women of the future by their successors. While it is certain that much of the practical work must be taught by policemen, who, after generations of experience and tradition are bound to know more about crime than police-women with only a few years' experience behind them, there is a solid foundation of principle in the training which must be laid by women, if this great reform is to bear fruit.

The ideals of the true policewoman must be dear to the heart of every christian and every feminist, for a properly instructed woman takes up this hard and painful profession with a firm purpose to use the opportunities afforded her for the furtherance of purity and equal justice. The prevention of crime, the prevention of immorality, the protection of the innocent, the salvation of child victims are some of the potent accomplishments which policewomen are striving to attain.

The findings of the Royal Commission may not be wholly satisfactory, but they are a beginning of better things, and form a nucleus for a Reform, which, if only it is properly initiated, should be of the greatest assistance to suffering women when they are down and out.

Though failing to grasp the importance of a sister Service of policewomen to work in conjunction with the male Force, the Report suggests that: "A woman experienced in the routine of a Government Department and in the organisation of disciplined bodies of women be appointed as subordinate to H.M. Inspector of Constabulary at the Home Office, to inspect and make recommendations with regard to the efficiency of policewomen."†

The question naturally arises, to whom should this post be given?

The answer is to be found in the *Police Chronicle* of Aug. 27th, 1920, which says: "We have no hesitation in saying that

† Report, Part VIII., paragraph 67.

if this appointment is made on sheer merit, experience and capacity, it should go to Commandant Allen now in charge of the W.P.S. She can have no rival, for her knowledge and ability in regard to the work of policewomen is unique."

It is earnestly to be hoped that this obvious appointment will be made, so that the future of British Women Police will be assured, and the work of the great woman who has passed to her reward will be carried on as she would have wished it to be.

The full magnitude of that work, and the effect it will have on the further emancipation of woman only time will show, and history has yet to focus the full debt of gratitude which society owes to Commandant Damer Dawson, who gave up her life through over-work in the service of suffering humanity. May she rest in peace!

TREASURER'S NOTE.

Once again I remind all who believe in the C.W.S.S. of the duty of subscribing to the Office Rent, contributions for which were sadly in arrears this Michaelmas. In words borrowed from the promoters of a recent flag-day—you are all sick of these (appeals). We are more sick of them—but what are we to do? There must be many readers of this paper who do not pay a membership subscription to the Society, but who could send us a small donation as practical proof of their sympathy with the work.

SALE OF WORK.

The C.W.S.S. will have its usual stall of Needlework and useful articles for Christmas presents at this Sale on November 26th and 27th. It is hoped that every member will make a point of sending at least one gift, which should reach the office not later than November 24th. Anyone who feels unable to give more money can help equally in this way.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH.

We remind members of our Jumble Sale, to be held at the end of November. Parcels can be called for.

LIVES OF WOMEN DOCTORS.

DR. EDITH BROWN, of Ludhiana, foundress of a Medical School for Native Christian Women.

By MARGARET LAMONT, M.D., B.S., Lond.

My early school-days were spent in Scotland, but when I was thirteen, I spent a year at the Croydon High School for Girls, one of the first of such schools ever built. I had a very pious old grand-aunt, widow of a Presbyterian clergyman, who told me to look out for one of the big girls in Form VI., a certain Edith Brown, who had consecrated her life to Medical Mission work. She belonged to either the Primitive Methodists or the Plymouth Brethren, yet only the other day I heard of her speaking at a meeting held on the lawn of one of the chief Vicarages of Eastbourne. She has not become an Anglican, but medicine broadens the mind, and Mission hospitals are far more interdenominational than anything else in the tropics, except post office and railway station. The work which she has founded, the North India Medical School for Women, now admits even Catholics, Muhammedan and pagan *Students*, besides all denominations of Protestants. Practically all hospitals, government, Protestant Missionary, or Catholic, admit as *patients* persons of all creeds. In addition the School and Hospital show their international character inasmuch as they were started by two English and two American ladies, the latter being (unlike Dr. Brown) Presbyterians. They derive funds from America, England, Scotland, and India. So we see that practical mission work tends to sicken people with the practical effects of schism. Many hospitals on the Missions are actually called Union Hospitals, and some churches Union Churches, because they are used by all (Protestant) denominations, and supported by all.

Whilst at school Miss Edith Brown won one of the earliest scholarships at Newnham College, Cambridge, and I remember that it was much discussed, as to whether it were really advisable for a missionary to take such a severely scientific course. I think that even then, at the age of eighteen, she had in her mind a plan for the Christian Medical

College she has now been conducting for over 25 years, for she maintained that a thoroughly good scientific course was as essential for the mission doctor as for any other.

We met again at the Royal Free Hospital in Gray's Inn Road, London, when I, as a humble young junior dresser, was put to work under her as a senior dresser, and one of the Surgeons who was also at St. Thomas' Hospital. I was much impressed by her skill, courage, and kindness, and the absolute quiet of her manner. Even then, it was evident what a gift she had for training others. I rather think she lived at home, and came up daily; but if so, it was a long journey for one who was on her feet attending to patients most of the day, and studying in the train and at home also, late into the night, and sometimes early in the morning also. Most of the Missionary Societies soon saw the desirability of having their own hostels, in which the students destined for foreign missions, could live together in a pious and missionary atmosphere, and at a cheaper rate than in regular students' clubs, while at the same time they were better cared for, both physically and spiritually, than those who shared lodgings together.

In 1894 the North India School of Medicine for Christian Women was opened in Ludhiana, and was the outcome of a conference (in 1893) of Women Mission Doctors who felt sure that a big Government Medical School for men and women (*over 90 per cent pagans*) would not be a very safe place for young native Christian women. Time has proved their wisdom, for, a few years ago, the Government closed the women's department of the Medical School at Lahore, and transferred all its students, both Christian and non-Christian, to the Ludhiana Missionary College. As usual in all Government affairs, it stipulated that the creed of the student must be left undisturbed, and this is an advantage for our Catholic girls, as at a purely

missionary (Protestant) college, worship and attendance at Protestant religious instruction is compulsory.

The Report for 1919 (semi-jubilee) states that up to that time they had turned out 61 doctors (all women of course and all Indians), 41 certificated compounders, 53 nurses, and 186 certificated midwives. The total of helpers of all grades was 335, and by now (end of 1920) must be quite 400. There are now 19 doctors on the staff, as lecturers, assistant lecturers and demonstrators. 12 of these have British or American, and the rest Indian diplomas. I showed this report to Mgr. Biondi, then Apostolic delegate to India (now transferred to Japan). He was delighted with such work, only wished it was Catholic, but said it was excellent work all the same.

The great point is that this College is greatly aiding to disseminate Protestant Christianity all over India, by means of its graduates, most of whom up to the present are earnest Christian women of one or another Protestant denomination. The best way of reaching pagan women is through doctors of their own sex, and it is absolutely the only way of reaching the secluded Muhammedan women. Even Native Christians think it much more becoming for women to be ministered to by other women. Now Mgr. Pozzini of Hongkong (Milan Foreign Missions) sees an equally good opportunity of starting a similar College, but this time under Catholic auspices, in his Cathedral town, which is also the site of the only British University in China. There is no such broad-minded medical school for women in China; all of them are distinctly denominational institutions, and though there may be a stray Catholic or two studying there, I never heard of any. She certainly would not be helped to practise her religion, and might be much hindered.

A British officer writing for the Bishop of Hong Kong says that the Irish community, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, and the Chinese, both Christian and pagan, would welcome a Catholic Medical School for Women, with of course a hospital attached. (Medicine is learned quite as much at the bed-side and surgery in the operation-room

as from books and models). As this is the port of entrance for the new American Mission to China, the scheme may well appeal as much to Americans as to ourselves. It might even afford a place of study for native women from the Dutch Catholic Missions of Borneo and Sumatra. These might prefer to go to the Government Medical School in Madras, but it must be remembered that we have as yet no Catholic hostel for women there, and some of the Dutch Native Christian women (or their fathers, actual or spiritual) might prefer them to study at a Medical School for women only, if we managed to get one up in Hong Kong. I am asked to Holland to speak at the Student's Missionary Conference at Amsterdam this October.

For the present I am hoping that *British Catholics* will furnish the means to educate in medicine at the rate of £100 a year, for 5 years, a student from the Holy Child, who has volunteered, with a distinct purpose to remain in mission work for life. The Cenacle Nuns are willing to house her at a reduced charge.

There is no reason why Catholics should not follow such an excellent example as the Ludhiana School, though it is a Protestant example. Catholics have one medical school on the Missions, at Beyruth, and another projected at Shanghai. *Both of these however are for men only.* Let us remember how our Lord tells us in His sweet parable of love and the works of mercy in S. Luke 10, the Gospel for the 12th Sunday after Pentecost (I suppose the Samaritans were in a way the Protestants of those days!) that a *certain Samaritan* as he journeyed . . . was moved with compassion . . . and bound up his wounds . . . and said to the host, Take care of him . . . and Jesus said to him, *go and do thou likewise.*

We hope all our members who can will come (and bring their friends) to the C.W.S.S. meeting at the Atelier Tea Rooms, 32, Tottenham Street, Tottenham Court Road, on Monday, November 8th, at six p.m., when Mrs. More Nisbett will speak on the Need of Women Police. Miss FitzGerald in the Chair. Tea at 5-30—8d.

THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.

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

METHODS.

1. Strictly non-party
2. Active propaganda by political and educational means.

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.

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Oct. 13. "Women as Justices of the Peace." Mrs. NEVINSON. Chairman—Mr. Cecil Hayes.
Oct. 20. "The Colonies, and their present position." LORD MORRIS, K.C.M.G. Chairman—The Hon. Sir John Cockburn, K.C.M.G.
Oct. 27. "The Situation in Hungary." Mrs. DESPARD. Chairman—Mr. J. Y. Kennedy.
Nov. 3. "The Injustice of the Laws dealing with Sexual Crime, and their Administration. Scotland." Mrs. HAMILTON MORE NISBETT. Chairman—Miss M. P. Grant.

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Speaker—

Mrs. MORE NISBETT

Sub. Inspector Women Police Service, Scotland.

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Nov. 3. Councillor Margaret Hodge. Subject: "Popular Fallacies."
Nov. 10. Miss K. Raleigh. Subject: "What St. Paul really said to Women."

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