

# Catholic Citizen

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

—Francis Thompson.

## Checking Commercialised Vice

By I. M. DICKINSON

The Report\* of the Fourteenth Session of the Traffic in Women and Children Committee of the League of Nations, which took place in May, is now published.

Even a cursory glance at this Report and at the local reports submitted to it by Governments and private associations gives some idea of the world-wide position in the struggle against exploited prostitution. Each year the League of Nations Committee casts its net of enquiry over a wider area. The Far East is now well in the foreground of its thoughts and plans.

Beginning with failures. It is plain that a depressing lack of interest in the question of sex morality is shown by the fact that many Governments and societies either send no report or send them too late for the consideration of the Committee. The work is thus seriously hampered. It is also plain from the disparity of reports from the same region that these are carelessly prepared or else that there is no great anxiety that the truth should be known. This applies especially to countries which have signed conventions for the suppression of traffic, and, at the same time retain their regulationist methods and cherish the abominable *maison tolérée*. Greece is an example of this state of things. She signed the Convention but the latest reports show that the Piræus is a hot bed of flourishing brothels officially winked at, if not acknowledged.

The illogic of the regulationist position was clearly shown by the discussion on the proposals for the Suppression of Souteneurs brought up at this year's session.

To retain the *maison tolérée*, and at the same

time undertake to carry out measures which will cut off the supply of women and girls for it, means mere lip service to a principle which is not believed in. The more brothels are under (nominal) sanitary and police inspection, the more must the inmates be continually changed and renewed. Witness Italy.

The British Delegate gave it as his opinion that the consideration of the draft Convention for the Suppression of Souteneurs would be a waste of time until all the other provisions which experience has shown to be necessary for the suppression of commercialised vice were carried out. Past experience and the latest reports from regulationist countries justify his uncompromising attitude.

There is, however, progress in many directions. The French reports are cheering. It really seems that opinion in France, especially medical opinion, is slowly being won over to abolitionist principles. The intensive campaign of the Temporary Union against Regulated Prostitution and that of the Equal Moral Standard Branch of the National Council of Women have borne fruit. Two towns, St. Brieu and Fontainebleau have closed their licensed houses, other towns intend to do so.

The appointment of Women Police is well liked by the Paris Prefect of Police.

The bulky reports on the position of Russian women refugees in China make depressing reading. The position of these unfortunates is steadily worsening as their numbers increase. In Shanghai they provide a major social problem. Both men and women are destitute and without hope of competing with underpaid Chinese labour. Women prostitute themselves in order to maintain their husbands and

\* C.187.M.104. 1935. IV.

brothers as well as themselves and their children.

Much good will to solve this difficult problem is shown by the Chinese authorities and representatives of the European powers. So far lack of co-operation between official and unofficial bodies and insufficient funds have almost neutralised the efforts to rehabilitate the women. Père Robert of the Sacred College of Propaganda who has extensive knowledge of the problem, points this out forcibly in evidence given to the Committee. The Committee emphasises these needs in its resolutions and also thinks that the most helpful way of attacking the problem would be to make an intensive effort in Harbin and other places in Manchuria to prevent the women drifting into prostitution there and subsequently moving on into China and becoming the victims of traffickers. The Committee gave it as its opinion "that the League of Nations might co-operate with the Chinese authorities to assist the Russian women."

The proposed Conference of the Central Authorities of the Eastern Countries has been discussed since 1933. As might be expected great difficulties are encountered owing to the different ways of viewing the question based on conflicting standards of sex morality, and different levels of progress in Eastern Countries. Progress is shown by the fact that China definitely, and Japan tentatively, informed the Committee through their delegates that they are favourably disposed towards the Conference.

Second in place to the question of the education of public opinion in sex morality; and to prevention work among the young of both sexes; comes the question of the rehabilitation of the ex-prostitute. Catholics must read with pride the part which the Church through her Religious Orders and Congregations of devoted women takes in this. We are apt to regard some of the methods they employ as old-fashioned and to forget the spirit of maternal charity and the Catholic respect for human dignity which underlies the work. And indeed far from being in the rear of modern experiments in rescue work, we read in the Report† of Catholic Rehabilitation Institutions, presented by the International Union of Catholic Women's Leagues, of daring which makes us gasp. The Opera del Magnificat of Turin, a new foundation, receives women who have suffered from venereal disease on their discharge from

† C.T.F.E. 646.

hospital; it admits the ex-inmates of licensed houses.

In the "Ste. Marguerite de Cortone" Institute at Antwerp all modern scientific aids are brought to the study of the psychological as well as the physical and pathological aspects of the problem. Observation of the inmates is continued not only while they are in the institution but after they leave, and exact records are kept of each case. The morally stronger girls are sent out to work outside the institution which is said in its training facilities to resemble a well-organised technical school.

The Dominican Nuns of Bethany show a marvellous faith. They have decided to admit among themselves without any consideration of the life previously led by applicants, any woman who wishes to lead a better life and who aspires to share in the religious life of the Nuns. From being rehabilitated many of these women pass on after a formation period to being themselves rehabilitators of their younger or weaker sisters. We must recall Cardinal Mercier's words that no other institute bears more eloquent witness to the respect due to human dignity.

The principle of individualisation is increasingly recognised. All the Committees agree that each case must be dealt with through its own personality. The words of a Good Shepherd Nun quoted in the report summarize all fruitful effort; she says "the one essential thing is to restore self-respect."

## Look To Your Votes

In view of the probability of a General Election in the near future, it is important for readers to inspect the lists of electors which were published on July 15th.

The annual register of electors will be published on October 15th next and will remain in force for a year. The preliminary lists may now be seen at the various post offices and other public buildings and at the office of the registration officer in each district. It is important that these lists should be inspected to ensure that names are not omitted.

Should the name of any person entitled to a vote be omitted from the list, a claim should be sent in at once to the registration officer at the local town hall. The last day for sending in claims is August 7th in England and Wales, and August 22nd in Scotland.

## Notes and Comments

It is encouraging that the present campaign for Equal Pay has already resulted in a debate on this subject in the House of Common (June 7th) the first debate for 15 years. Many of the speakers who advocated the principle were content to emphasise the fact that unequal pay caused women to replace men. Many members however made very able equalitarian speeches—notably Mr. West (Hammersmith), Major Hills, Sir Percy Harris, Mr. George Lansbury and Mrs. Tate. Mr. Duff Cooper replying for the Government put forward the usual arguments against equal pay: that women were not really as "good value" as men; they needed more sick leave; for certain kinds of work they were not as efficient, and there was "marriage wastage." The Government was not prepared to incur the extra expenditure involved, or to pledge themselves to a principle which did not truly represent the facts.

The inference seems to be, to economise by employing women—hardly an encouraging thought for those women who are making just as good a job for their life work as any man, and who do not want to remain in the ignominious position of being chosen for work, not on their own merits, but because they happen to be paid less.

We understand that the new posts of Adjudicating Officers, and Assistant Adjudicating Officers, recently created by the Public Assistance Committee of the L.C.C., were thrown open equally to men and women applicants. Very few women applied. This is regrettable, as the work, calling as it does for intimate knowledge of domestic life and its difficulties, would appear peculiarly suitable for women. It is to be hoped that this matter may be remedied later on, when the opportunity is better known.

In an interview published in the *Catholic Herald* of June 15th, our member, Mrs. J. A. Lyons say much of interest on the upbringing of boys and girls, from her own experience with a large family. We are glad to quote the following:

As regards the actual education of a child I am very definitely against any rigid differentiation between the mentality of boy and girl.

This insistence on difference in the two mentalities results in the girl later on developing a

sense of inferiority, with the corresponding superiority complex in the boy, which I find utterly insufferable.

While in no way advocating "mannish" girls, I do think that a girl should not, just because of her sex, be debarred from any activity for which she has talent. It should not be immediately assumed that the domestic side of life is the only, or even main, sphere, open to her. On the other hand, the girl without any flair for it should not be made to feel that she ought to pursue a career.

It is a pleasure to read anything so sensible when so much nonsense is often talked about the education of girls.

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Australian women should be proud of their feminist leaders and it gives us great pleasure to congratulate several of these, who, this Jubilee year, have gained recognition for their good work.

Mrs. Bessie Rischbieth, who will be Australian delegate to the League of Nations Assembly this year, Dr. Georgina Sweet, D.Sc., and Mrs. Edith Waterworth have had conferred on them the O.B.E. for their work for Women's Movements in the Commonwealth of Australia. Mrs. Linda Littlejohn, J.P., Mrs. Jessie Street, Mrs. Jamieson Williams and Mrs. Cardwell Oliver, members of the Australian Federation of Women Voters, have received Jubilee Medals for Feminist Leadership.

Nearer home, we are very glad to note that Mrs. Ogilvie Gordon has been made D.B.E., and we congratulate our member Mrs. Beer, who has been made M.B.E. in recognition of valuable services on various Trades Boards.

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We offer warm congratulations to our associate member, the Very Rev. Canon Bickford, President of St. Edmund's College, Old Hall, Ware who has been appointed by His Holiness the Pope one of his Domestic Prelates.

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The prayers of our readers are asked for the repose of the soul of Dr. Wickham, husband of our member, Mrs. Wickham, who died recently. R.I.P.

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The office will be closed during the month of August, but all correspondence will be promptly dealt with.

## ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE,

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

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MISS CHRISTINE SPENDER, *Hon. Editor.*

## "The Truth Will Make Them Free."

This Congress declares that in order to:

Combat effectively attacks on women's Right to Work;

Defend the married woman wage-earner;

Win full economic rights for the woman worker, and assure justice in the application of rights already won;

only one course is open to women: to unite their forces in order to exercise real power.

The Congress therefore:

Urges its auxiliaries in all countries to establish permanent co-operation with other women's societies with the object of promoting a clearer understanding between women workers, whether paid or unpaid, so that the sentiment of solidarity between all women may be created or strengthened.

This resolution was passed at the 12th Congress of the International Alliance for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship held at Istanbul last April. There is no need to seek far in order to find the necessity for such a resolution. A very recent example of the widespread attack on women's right to earn is contained in a Bill introduced by the Irish Free State Government in the Dail Eirean. Clause 12 of this Bill (the Conditions of Employment Bill, 1935) gives the Minister of Labour and Commerce power to make Resolutions in respect to any form of industrial work either prohibiting the employment of any female in such work, or fixing the proportion of female to male workers employed by any employer in such work. Germany, Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Yugoslavia have all passed legislation with a view to limiting the work of women and replacing female by male labour. Sometimes such legislation applies to industry and sometimes to Government services—for instance, in Belgium, a circular of the Prime Minister, of 12th April, 1934, states the Government's decision to reserve for men all available posts in public administrative departments, including shorthand typists' posts, until further notice.

Even in our own country there is cause for uneasiness, for in the recent report on Depressed Areas, Sir Euan Wallace made a suggestion "to consider seriously some limitation of the fields of female labour"—and there have been like propositions from other quarters.

The underlying motive of this desire to oust women from paid employment is the widespread idea that in this manner the unemployment of men will be remedied. We are glad to note that the Director of the International Labour Office takes another view, and we quote from his report of the year 1934-1935, presented to the 19th Session of the International Labour Conference:

... There is a fairly widespread tendency to go back to the idea that women's labour implies the exclusion of men. The fallacy of this notion is being demonstrated in countries where efforts have been made to substitute male for female labour, apparently with very exiguous results. Quite apart from any question of abstract justice, it is clear that women are better qualified than men for some occupations, and that to exclude them would defeat its own end as being uneconomic. As long as men's incomes are insufficient to cover civilised requirements or even elementary necessities, millions of girls and married women are forced to supplement the family income by seeking work. Even if this motive were removed, there are large numbers of women who would still work for their own satisfaction or to meet their personal needs and whose skill forms a necessary element in the scheme of production. But there is a case for preventing what might be called "unfair competition" between men and women. The formula "equal pay for equal work" is not easy to apply in concrete cases, because the mathematical calculation of "work" is apt to be extremely elusive; but the whole subject of women's work merits closer and more unprejudiced analysis than it has yet received.

Again, we quote from an article on "Unemployment and Employment among Women," by Henri Fuss, which appears in the April

number of the *International Labour Review*:

... Contrary to a rather widespread belief, persons who work for remuneration do not deprive someone else of employment, because their own earnings give them the power to purchase goods or services that give employment to other persons. Each person's work calls for the employment of others, and it is on the contrary the idleness of some that leads to the unemployment of others.

Women are continually being forced into the position of black-legs, by means of unequal pay which means in practice that there can be justice neither for men nor for women, and that the purchasing power referred to by Henri Fuss is so lowered as to increase unemployment. Turning women away from paid employment, demonstrably, cannot help matters, and is very unjust to women who suffer from unemployment just as much as men. Mr. Kupers (Workers' Delegate, Netherlands) emphasised this last point when speaking at the 19th Session of The International Labour Conference held this June in Geneva. To quote from his speech (we take this quotation and subsequent quotations from the Provisional Records of the Session):

A number of countries during the last few years have promulgated laws or introduced other measures as a consequence of which numbers of women have been dismissed from their posts and men engaged to replace them. I want to utter a word of warning here in this Conference against the adoption of such measures. As a means of combating unemployment, these measures, which are most unfair to working women, are of hardly any significance. Even with the excuse of the crisis, it is a retrograde step at this stage of the world's development to restrict women's right to work. From an article recently published in the "International Labour Review," it appears that out of some twenty million unemployed in 34 countries about 4 million were women. Very often economic necessity obliges women to seek work because the head of the family earns too little. Where will these women and girls be driven to look for a living if they are forced to give up their place in industrial activity? This is a question which many governments—which claim to be the protectors of morality—may well ask themselves.

... I should like to ask whether it does not fall within the scope of the activities of the International Labour Organisation to consider what measures can be taken in order to protect the right to work which, in the course of years, women and girls have acquired in almost all countries of the world.

It is encouraging to know that workers' delegates to the International Labour Conference see things in such a light. At the same Conference Miss Abbott (Government Delegate U.S.A.) also referred to women's work, and but for lack of space we should quote the whole of her reference. She pointed out the fallacy

of excluding women from industry in order to better the conditions of men workers and she drew attention to the fact that the "great majority of young women, as of young men, have no choice; they must work to live." She went on to say that "the gainful employment of women is no new development," that "men and women both worked on the home farm" and that they have "from necessity and not from choice, followed their work from the home to the factory." We must quote in full her valuable remarks on the evil effects of discrimination against women workers:

Experience—often bitter experience—has demonstrated that discrimination against women in the labour market, the selection of workers on any basis except competence, the payment and promotion of workers on any basis except merit, is sure to react against the favoured classes as well as those discriminated against. If women cannot work side by side with men in their labour organisations for the improvement of their conditions and for the betterment of social conditions generally, if they are to be discriminated against in this way, we compel them to be under-bidders in the labour market and make a new class which can be exploited indefinitely. There are to-day millions of unemployed young women as well as millions of unemployed young men. The temptations and problems of the women are no less serious than those of the men. If, in an industrial society the opportunity to work is denied them, all that is offered to women—married or unmarried, or at least many of them—is the alternative of destitution or the pursuit of the ancient but outlawed profession of women.

It is, I think, possible for the International Labour Organisation to help to a better understanding of this whole problem, and prevent costly and cruel mistakes by further studies of the work of women. Facts and not prejudices and outgrown conceptions must be the basis of our conclusions in this as in other fields. Women welcome the study of their problems because they believe that the truth will make them free.

"The truth will make them free!" It is for the Women's Organisations in every country to proclaim and defend the truth that woman is an adult human being, whose right to remunerative work is fundamental and inalienable, and cannot be taken away from her without injustice.

CHRISTINE SPENDER.

We offer warm congratulations and best wishes to two newly-married members—to Miss Ethel Poulton, D.Sc., M.Sc., on her marriage to Mr. Humphrey Watts, and to Miss Patricia Hope Robson on her marriage to Mr. Norman Sydenham.

## British Commonwealth League Conference

The annual Conference of the British Commonwealth League was held at the Y.W.C.A. Central Club, London, on June 18th, 19th, and 20th, Mrs. Corbett Ashby presiding. Over 50 organisations sent delegates, including St. Joan's Alliance.

The first resolutions asked for Woman Suffrage in Bermuda and Quebec, and the following resolution on franchise in India was proposed by the Women's Indian Association:

Believing that the principle of equality is the one towards which all women's societies should work, the British Commonwealth League in Conference assembled protests that the India Bill is in opposition to the demands of all the organised Indian women, and supports the demand that:

- (a) The number of women electors in the new franchise proposals should be equal to the number of enfranchised men,
- (b) The principle of adult franchise be recognised by accepting their proposal of adult franchise in urban areas as the beginning, rather than the suggested wives' and widows' votes, and,
- (c) Further supports their disapproval of the communal basis being forced into the elections as far as women are concerned, and urges His Majesty's Government to facilitate the future amendment of the India Act in this direction.

Australian aborigines were dealt with in three resolutions which pressed the necessity for concerted action in the direction of a National Policy to deal with aboriginal matters, and welcomed (with an important proviso against compulsory examination of women for venereal disease) the publication of the report of the Royal Commission on the treatment of aborigines in Western Australia.

A resolution proposed by Miss Nina Boyle on behalf of the Suffragette Fellowship and seconded by Mrs. Laughton Mathews, M.B.E., on behalf of St. Joan's Alliance, was passed urging the various Governments within the British Empire to secure the abolition of slavery and all customs and abuses akin to slavery within their territories, and also calling upon them to discountenance any practices relative to the bartering of women and children into domestic or any other form of slavery; further, expressing satisfaction "that the Mandates Commission of the League of Nations is devoting special attention to the important problem of the condition of women in certain mandated territories."

A long and comprehensive resolution on the Nationality of Married Women was passed, dealing with recent legislation on the subject in New Zealand and the Irish Free State, and

urging the British and Dominion Governments "to come to an agreement to introduce legislation in their respective parliaments to give the married woman her nationality on the same terms as a man or single woman"; and further urging these Governments to propose that any international convention on nationality should be such as to provide that the married woman should enjoy independent nationality in her own person.

Mrs. Littlejohn of Australia moved a resolution on Equal Rights asking the British Parliament and the responsible overseas Governments of the Empire to "adopt the principles of equality in all future legislation, and to remove discriminations existing against women, whether married or single." Equal status was dealt with in a separate resolution which called upon the Government of Great Britain and the Dominions' Representatives, to support the principles of equality between men and women at the 16th Assembly of the League of Nations, by adhering to a treaty which would clearly confer equality of rights.

A resolution on Education urged societies of organised women to seek the co-operation of educational authorities in furthering, through educational programmes, the advancement of equal status between the sexes and "to consider what steps can be taken to secure the loyal adherence of young people to a high and equal moral standard." Further resolutions concerned educational policy in the Protectorates, Child Marriage, and the legal disabilities of Indian women—this last being eloquently moved by Lady Quadir, and seconded by Mrs. Rama Rau (Women's Indian Association).

An emergency resolution was passed protesting against the appointment of Sir Euan Wallace as parliamentary Under Secretary to the Home Office, in view of his statement in the report on the Depressed Areas: "that it would appear necessary seriously to consider some limitation of the field of female labour, except in cases where the absolute existence of an expert industry depended on it"; and a further emergency resolution protested against the proposal of the Irish Free State Government to enable the Minister of Labour or Commerce to make Regulations, either prohibiting the employment of women in any form of industry or work, or fixing the proportion of female to male workers employed in such work.

A verbatim report of the Conference is published at 2s., and may be obtained from the British Commonwealth League.

## Bermuda

Through the courtesy of the Women's Freedom League who have sent us a copy of a letter received by them, from one of the chief personalities of the Bermuda Woman Suffrage Society, we learn "bad, incredibly bad, news." In the first place the Amendment to the Parish Vestries' Act (1929) which was introduced into the Bermuda House of Assembly early this year, was overwhelmingly defeated. The Amendment asked for the removal of the qualification of "male" for voters in the Local Government units, the Parish Vestries.

Further, since this happening a select committee of the Bermuda House has presented a Report recommending among other means for the alleviation of unemployment:

(1) That mental defectives be compulsorily sterilised and that persons guilty of rape, or attempted rape, and other sexual and/or unnatural offences be compulsorily castrated or undergo such other operation as will render a repetition of the offence a physical impossibility.

(2) (a) That voluntary sterilisation be legalised. (b) The Government to defray the cost of sterilisation where the father of two or more children desires to be sterilised. (c) The mother of two illegitimate children to be compulsorily sterilised. (d) The father of an illegitimate child to be sterilised.

(3) That the dissemination of birth-control information be legalised and that the Board of Health maintain three birth control clinics, one in each of the Eastern, Central and Western Districts, under such restrictions as will best conduce to the maintenance of morality and Christian principles.

Emphasis is laid on the "pressure of population" and it is insisted that "some measure to restrict increase in population must be devised" to avoid the lowering of the standard of living. No humane consideration is taken into account, and the W.F.L. correspondent points out that "this is the first recognition by our law of the existence of mental defectives." An ignoble panic that prosperity in Bermuda is about to cease has caused the Committee to recommend these "brutal" measures which contain no recognition of human rights or of human responsibility for good or ill. To quote again from the letter to the W.F.L.:

The Bishop of Bermuda to-day summoned a meeting of the clergy of all denominations and I understand that a Resolution was passed protesting against the three clauses I have referred to . . .

I do not need to comment on these happenings. It does not seem that we were living in a British Colony when such suggestions can be brought forward. We seem to be facing a period of depression and unemployment, and the oligarchy who have in our days of prosperity imported labour for their needs are now frightened that they may have to face the financial responsibility of unem-

ployment and are putting all the emphasis on over-population and suggesting these brutal methods of population reduction.

The Suffrage Society has existed since 1890 and is a gallant band of women who are ready to go to any honourable length to gain the vote. It will be remembered that fairly recently many of them were sentenced for tax-resisting. But their task is peculiarly difficult, as the government is in the hands of a few, there being only some 1,300 voters out of a total population of more than 30,000.

## Social Gatherings

The Alliance was proud to be represented at Mrs. Despard's 91st Birthday Party given by the Women's Freedom League at the Caxton Hall. Miss Meredith, in the name of the Alliance, presented flowers to her with our best wishes and as a token of gratitude for her pioneer work for woman's suffrage.

Under the auspices of the National Council for Equal Citizenship, St. Joan's Alliance, and the Women Freedom League, and through the kindness of Mrs. Clement Davies who lent her house in Kensington, a party was given on June 27th, when guests were enabled to hear something of the Congress at Istanbul. Mrs. Corbett Ashby, Miss Picton Turberville, Mrs. Laughton Mathews, Mrs. Littlejohn (Australia), and Miss Alison Neilans were the speakers, and each took a different aspect of the Congress and described it. Miss Rosa Manus (Vice-President of the International Woman's Suffrage Alliance), to every one's delight, also consented to say a few words on her impressions of the Congress. Mrs. Hubback was in the chair.

On June 28th, through the kindness of Mrs. Shattock, a party was given under the auspices of St. Joan's Alliance at her house in Regent's Park, to do honour to our distinguished member from the United States, Miss Helen C. White, Ph.D., Professor of English at Wisconsin University. Miss White gave a charming talk on "Catholic Tradition in the New World," in which she described the impact of Catholicism, through emigrants and missionaries, on the New World of North America.

Miss White is author of two historical novels, "A Watch in the Night" dealing with the early Franciscans, which has gone through four editions, and "Not Built with Hands," a study of Matilda of Tuscany which has just been published. She has two scholarly treatises on the writings of English mystics to her credit.

## International Notes

At the Tenth Session of the Committee of Representatives of International Students' Organisations held under the auspices of the League of Nations International Organisation for Intellectual Co-operation, at Geneva in April, the question of unemployment among the young university graduates was discussed, with the assistance of the International Labour Office. We are glad to note from the *Monthly Summary of the League of Nations*, that the Committee agreed that "the imposition of a bar against women or against certain classes of the population on grounds of race or of opinion, is contrary to the very idea of the University." The Committee also held that there should be no special restrictions on the employment of women.

In order that the Intellectual Co-operation Committee may include a distinguished woman, as has not been the case since the death of Mme. Curie, the Council of the League has decided provisionally to increase the number of members and has appointed to the new seat—which will be abolished at the elections to the Committee in 1937—Mme. Cécile de Tormay, the Hungarian novelist, historian and critic.

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The resolutions passed at the Istanbul Congress may be read in full in the May number of *Jus Suffragii*. Among them is one of special interest, put forward by the Indian delegation, protesting against the practice of Polygamy and recommending to the Governments of those countries where it is practised to abolish it by law. So often we are told that the "time is not yet ripe" when it is a question of reforms which cut across the social life of a people. Yet here we have Indian women proposing a resolution which asks for suppression of a custom which is still prevalent in certain sections of the Indian community.

A resolution protesting against any forms of discrimination, injustice and inequality towards women of the African race throughout the world and protesting against the outrageous barbarity of lynching as practiced in the United States of America, pledging support to the women who are fighting this great evil, was proposed by Miss Marson, delegate from Jamaica. Speaking of the African race Miss Marson said that since the great powers have shared nearly the whole of Africa among themselves, it is incumbent on them to better the conditions there. Sometimes it was said that

the black peoples would be better without change and that they would be happier without adopting European customs. But, said Miss Marson, they have the same longing as others for all that is best. Miss Marson went on to beg the help of the women of the world in securing the future well-being of the black peoples and in remedying the injustices perpetrated against them.

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We offer congratulations to our co-religionist Miss May Holman, M.L.A., who has held a seat in the Western Australian Parliament for ten consecutive years and is the first woman member of any Australian Parliament. We learn from a Souvenir issued by the Labour Women's Central Executive of Western Australia, that Miss Holman's father, as Federal President of the Timber Workers Union, gave his daughter the opportunity of having a thorough grounding in the inner workings of industrial unions, and subsequently when Mr. Hunt became the Union's advocate in State and Federal Courts, Miss Holman was his assistant, not only in the Courts but also in the preparation of the worker's case. In her father's absence, Miss Holman used to take his place in the courts. Miss Holman was responsible for the Timber Industry Regulation Act, 1926. We had the pleasure of meeting her here in 1930, when she was in Europe to attend the League of Nations Assembly as Australian delegate.

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We quote the following from a description of the life of the Carmelite Sisters' Third Order, Regulars, of Port of Spain, Trinidad, British West Indies, published in the July number of the *Catholic Nurse*. The chief work of the Sisters is the care of the aged—Creole and Negro, Spanish, French and Indian women.

The convict settlement is visited weekly by two Sisters, who go by steamer on His Majesty's service tickets, board a boat rowed by prisoners to reach the convict island, and mount a hundred or more rugged steps hewn out of the rock to get to the prison. The "boys" as the Sisters call them love singing, especially "Hail, Holy Queen." Some times the Sisters are asked to prepare a condemned man for death, a sad duty, but consolation comes at the end, when on the day of death Holy Mass is said in the man's cell and for the last time he receives his merciful Saviour in Holy Communion.

A Sister is Probation Officer and attends Juvenile Court; here quite amusing things happen sometimes, as recently, when a portly Negress appeared, dragging a very small boy and requesting that he be flogged; the Magistrate suggesting that the mother had better do it herself, said the woman: "Me lick him it no good, the Crown lick him it last."

## Congress Stamps

The Turkish Government has issued a special series of postage stamps to commemorate the recent Women's Congress at Istanbul. The stamps represent the portraits of Mrs. Chapman Catt, Founder and Hon. President of the Suffrage Alliance, and of the six women to whom the Nobel Prize has been awarded: Mme. Curie (Science); Grazia Deledda, Selma Lagerlöf and Sigrid Undset (Literature); Jane Addams and Bertha von Suttner (Peace). In addition there are symbolic representations of one or two activities of women and also of the Yildiz Palace at Istanbul where the Congress took place, and of Kemal Attatürk, President of the Turkish Republic.

These stamps may be ordered through St. Joan's Alliance. They are of the greatest interest both to those who wish for a memento of an important event and to those who collect stamps. The total proceeds of the issue will be equally shared between the Turkish Government and the International Alliance for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship. Series of 7 stamps can be obtained at 2s. 2½d., of 12 at 8s. 6½d., and a complete set of 15 stamps at £1 2s. 3d.

## INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE

The Draft Convention concerning the Employment of Women on Underground Work in Mines of All Kinds which was adopted at the 19th Session of the International Labour Conference, held in Geneva during June, contains, among others, the following clauses:

### Article 2

No female, whatever her age, shall be employed on underground work in any mine.

### Article 3

National laws or regulations may exempt from the above prohibition:

- females holding positions of management who do not perform manual work;
- females employed in health and welfare services;
- females who, in the course of their studies, spend a period of training in the underground parts of a mine; and
- any other females who may occasionally have to enter the underground parts of a mine for the purpose of a non-manual occupation.

It is no doubt owing to the work of a number of women's organisation, including St. Joan's Alliance, that at any rate certain categories of non-manual workers may be excluded from the prohibitions of the Convention.

We take from the *Women's Freedom League Bulletin* the information that the Canadian Alliance for Women's Votes of Quebec, which has so long fought for the provincial vote in that Province, has sent a Jubilee Petition to the King begging him to give an expression of sympathy and approval of their efforts to obtain political enfranchisement, a right enjoyed by all other women of Canada, and which would be in accord with the principles of common law and equity. This Petition, in French and in English, has been signed by 9,000 women of the Province, among the signatures being those of women who made the first unsuccessful appeal to the Quebec legislature in 1922 in favour of women's franchise. Madame Frémont, our co-religionist, is President of the Alliance for Women's Votes.

S. A. B.

\* \* \* \*

The third number of *Le Document* is a comprehensive survey of the life of a Frenchwoman, her education, and employment in all possible careers open to her. It is very interesting and beautifully illustrated.

The article on women on the land, and the measures which are being taken to make rural occupations more attractive and thereby prevent the rush to the cities, shows how varied the openings for women are, including those for game keepers, charcoal burners and in forestry.

There appear to be greater training facilities under the State and private management than exist in this country.

I. M. D.

\* \* \* \*

In the message which President Alessandri of Chile read to Congress at the opening of that assembly on the 21st of May, he alluded to the fact that the women of Chile exercised the right of voting for the first time when they voted in the municipal elections last April. "This circumstance," he said, "added to the law which recognizes the Chilean woman's civil rights and the plenitude of her powers in her private capacity, represents an advanced concept tending to remove differences between the sexes unjustified either by reason or by the highest considerations of justice and right." President Alessandri's government, which is responsible for these reforms, is supported by a Liberal-Conservative coalition. In contrast to preceding revolutionary governments, it has made constitutionalism its ideal.

H. D. I.

## Reviews

**The Catholic Catechism** drawn up by Cardinal Gasparri. (Sheed & Ward, cheap edition 4s. 6d.)

This is a valuable book not only for those who are catechists and for those who wish for a deeper knowledge of their religion, but as a book of reference when any detail of Catholic dogma has to be argued. Besides three graded catechisms there are copious notes and six appendices. The catechism for little children (Part I) contains useful hints for the teacher. Appendix VI is composed of testimonies referred to in the Catechism: from the Œcumenical Councils, the Roman Pontiffs, the Fathers of the Church and the Roman Congregations.

**Christine Murrell, M.D.** By Christopher St. John. (Williams & Norgate, 5s.)

Christine Murrell was destined to profit by the early struggles to gain access to the medical profession, of women such as Sophia Jex Blake and Edith Pechey. She became the first woman member of the General Medical Council of Great Britain (though she died on the morrow of her election), and she was the first woman to be elected to the Council of the British Medical Association. Her great contribution to woman's fight for equality, was to prove that women are well able to take their place on an equal footing with men and "en bonne camarade," to pull their weight in work for the betterment of humanity. That men and women should aim at working *together* instead of at cross-purposes as they too often do, perhaps needs stressing more than anything else to-day.

But Christine Murrell "did not think that her indirect service as a medical practitioner was enough and gave a great deal of time and energy to direct participation in the Suffrage movement." She joined the W.S.P.U. and "served it with unfaltering loyalty," and after the vote was won she served as Chairman of the Women's Election Committee. During the militant struggle she put her medical skill at the service of the hunger-strikers and some of them were nursed back to health in her own home.

This book shows Christine Murrell in all the different aspects of a full and busy life. The chapter entitled "The Feminist" is of special

interest to-day, when the Night Work Convention and the Convention on Underground Work for Women in Mines are to the fore, as it gives an account of Dr. Murrell's opposition to any special legislation for women in industry. Christine Murrell had made a special study of the problems of women's health and as a woman doctor her words had authority. Miss St. John quotes passages from a paper published in a supplement to the British Medical Journal "which show how clearly Christine Murrell realized that this protective legislation, with its appearance of being in women's interests was an insidious repudiation of the principle of equality of opportunity."

This is an extraordinarily living picture of a very lovable and very human person. Miss St. John is to be congratulated for the way in which she allows those who were nearest to Dr. Murrell to give their impressions of her. Here is one sentence from the narrative of Dr. Murrell's secretary:

Up to the day before her death she dictated letters to me. On her birthday, October 18th, I went into her room in the morning as usual. She said: "I'm going to have a day off, because it is my birthday. I'm tired too. I will answer all those letters to-morrow." To-morrow never dawned for her. She died on the evening of her birthday.

**Hostels in London for Professional and Working Women and Girls.** 1935. (Price 1s.)

This is the sixth edition of a Handbook compiled by the Central Council for the Social Welfare of Girls and Women in London, whose offices and Information Bureau are at 53, Victoria Street, S.W.1. The Handbook is designed to assist girls and women to obtain suitable hostel accommodation at a reasonable price, and is a mine of valuable information.

C. S.

**Protective Legislation for Shop and Office Employees.** By J. Hallsworth. (Harrap 5s.)

This is a revised edition of a book reviewed in the *Catholic Citizen* of February last year. The new edition includes an exposition of the Shops Act, 1934.

## HON. TREASURER'S NOTE

Many thanks to those who have sent in their annual subscriptions. We shall be very glad if those who have not yet done so, will send them to the office as soon as possible.

May we also remind members who are going on holiday that we shall be requiring gifts for the annual sale in the autumn.

Jumbles for the barrow are urgently needed as usual.

P. M. BRANDT.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS

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## LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH

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We are hoping to arrange a garden meeting in August when we expect to have with us our Hon. Secretary from headquarters and the editor of the "Catholic Citizen."

We ask the prayers of readers for the repose of the soul of Mr. Gregson, who died suddenly. R.I.P. We offer our deep sympathy to Mrs. and Miss Gregson.

## BOOKS RECEIVED

**THE WAY OF SIMPLICITY.** By W. E. Orchard, D.D. (Putnam, 5s.)

**APOLOGETICS FOR THE PULPIT (Vol. I).** By Aloysius Roche. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne 6s.)

**THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS** according to St. Alphonsus. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne 1s.)

**CHALLENGE TO DEATH.** Symposium with Foreword by Viscount Cecil. (Constable 5s.)

## FOURTH CONFERENCE OF THE OPEN DOOR INTERNATIONAL Christiansborg Castle, Copenhagen, Denmark 19th to 23rd August, 1935

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