

THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN

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

Vol. XXXVIII. No. 12.

15th DECEMBER, 1952.

Price Fourpence.

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.

Josephine Butler. A Great Reformer

By B. M. Chave Collisson

Born 1828, married 1852, died 1906. Within this framework of dates, we may fit together in one whole the life, character, and work of Josephine Butler. Fourth daughter of John Grey, a noted reformer, worker for the abolition of slavery, and lover of humanity, she was born at Millfield Hill in the County of Northumberland; but after 1833 her home was at Dilston, where John Grey, in charge of the Greenwich Naval Hospital Estates in Northumberland, lived. Her mother Hannah was an humanitarian of wide interest; Josephine grew through happy childhood deeply versed in religious teaching, freedom of mind, her life adorned by love of animals and of nature, to womanhood. She made an ideal marriage with George Butler, son of the Dean of Peterborough, and lived first at Oxford where Butler taught and lectured, then at Liverpool, and finally, when Mr. Butler became a Canon of the Cathedral, at Winchester. He proved her greatest stay and support. We quote: "She was at home in every society. She was very beautiful and of a gracious presence . . . she was a good painter and an extremely good musician . . . she was very full of humour . . . and had the faculty of being charmingly gay. She, above all things, loved her husband, and that love was wholly returned." She loved her children devotedly; but in 1864, lost her little daughter Eva, who overbalanced on an upper landing, and fell on a stone pavement at her mother's feet, to die a few hours after. Agony of mind was followed by "a yet firmer trust" in the love of God, and a newer understanding of pain. Early she worked for women; as suffragist, as believer in the higher education of women; but in her inmost soul she felt most deeply the unequal moral standard which not only allowed to men a sexual indulgence forbidden to women, but created a special class of outcast women for their pleasure. Against this she fought in Britain, in Europe, and still further afield; she took prostitutes into her own home, nursed them with love: she cared

for the outcast; but her great work was the work of a soul inspired by justice, love, and sacrifice.

What precisely was that work? In 1869, returned from a Continental holiday, Josephine Butler learned that in a thin August session of Parliament there had been passed the third Contagious Diseases Act. These Acts sought to impose upon England the Napoleonic system of tolerated vice. They applied to sixteen naval and military areas of Britain, but it was intended to extend their operation to the whole country if possible. The main features of the Acts were (a) Registration and police supervision of prostitutes, (b) Their periodical medical examination for the detection of venereal disease, (c) Their compulsory detention in special hospitals if diseased. Thus women "suspected of being prostitutes" were deprived of the safeguards of personal security established by law; they could be arrested on suspicion, and punished for an offence that was not an offence in law. Forced medical examination followed. If they resisted, magistrates could sentence them to hard labour, repeated until they yielded. No system better devised for oppression, blackmail, and corruption could be imagined. Two earlier Acts had awakened protest, as did the third of 1869. A group of medical men appealed to Mrs. Butler to take a lead. But until December she was not ready. "During the three months which followed this communication I was very unhappy. . . . I fled from the face of the Lord. . . . I worked at other . . . good works . . . with a kind of half conscious hope that God would . . . not require me to go further and run my heart against the naked sword which seemed to be held out." Again she wrote: "Seen near, as it approaches (this mission) is so dreadful, so difficult, so disgusting that I tremble to look at it. . . . But I vividly recalled the madness and despair into which this fatal system drives the most despised of society, who are yet God's redeemed ones . . . and the call seems to come ever more

clearly." She dreaded the consequences for her husband: "My heart was shaken for the foreshadowing of what I knew he would suffer," but: "That good and noble man foreseeing what it meant for me and for himself spoke not one word to suggest difficulty or danger or impropriety . . . he did not pause to ask: Is this suitable work for a woman? . . . his whole attitude expressed 'Go! and God be with you.'"

There is not here space to record the long and bitter fight. Men and women like John Stuart Mill, Dr. Charles Bell Taylor, Harriet Martineau, thousands of working people, a few clergy, some doctors, rallied to the principles behind the fight. Those principles were based on justice. The basic fallacy to be fought was that sexual indulgence was necessary to men; that a special class of women must be provided to meet the need; that women who shared these acts of sexual indulgence for a price were outcast; but they must be made "safe!" for men by forced examination for venereal disease. The whole ugly structure of an unequal low moral standard lay revealed.

It is difficult in our time to realise the obloquy, the physical danger, the terrible abuse, which were the lot of respectable women who dared so much as to admit that they knew the meaning of the term "prostitute" or tried to secure any measure of justice for the children who were products of liaisons. Josephine Butler writes of attacks by fire, by crashing stones; of hurried flights and reassembly of the firm devotion of thousands of brave men and women.

The battle for repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts was not won until 1886. Meantime, the "abolitionists" as those who desired repeal were called, found other terrible links in a chain of dark horrors. The prostitute's very trade destroys her; her place must be taken; both in the underworld of England, and in the international traffic of organised vice, girls and women were bought and sold. Trapped when innocent, held in the trap by debts, physical devices like locked doors, the possession only of clothing which marked them for what they were, and unprotected by law, thousands were yearly literally lured to brothels, seduced, passed by well prepared routes to Europe or the near East, sometimes to South America. Hence arose the International Abolitionist Federation, still working to rid the remaining forty countries where tolerated brothels yet exist. Hence too arose the early International Agreements on Traffic between nations. Josephine Butler travelled tirelessly; interviewed the Heads of the notorious Police des Moeurs in Paris; led great protest meetings in Geneva; gathered noble souls to the work; and left behind her a firm system which is, up to date, the general official policy of the United Kingdom, so far as civilians are concerned. "No regulation." Much more could be written; but let us

turn back from the struggle against evil, which literally changed the face of the world, to consider the character and power of this great reformer. James Stuart wrote: "Josephine Butler was among the few great people of the world. In character, in work done, in influence on others, she was among that few great people who have moulded the course of things. The world is different because she lived. Like most of the very great people of the world she was extremely cosmopolitan. She belongs to all nations and for all time. She was a great leader of men and women . . . as an orator she touched the hearts of her hearers as no one else has done to whom I have listened." We are better because she has lived; she has sown a seed which cannot die. Hear her: "I have taken my place, oh, with what infinite contentment by the side of her, the 'woman in the city which was a sinner.'"

QUIZ ON THE WOMAN'S MOVEMENT In aid of the funds of St. Joan's Alliance First Prize 10/-; Second Prize: A Book

If competitors send their names and addresses and one shilling entrance fee to: Miss Douie, Women's Service Library, 50, Tufton Street, S.W.1 the questions will be forwarded to them. The replies to be returned to Miss Douie, not later than January 8th, 1953.

In the event of a tie, the first two correct solutions (or most nearly correct solutions) opened will receive the prizes.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

From "The Catholic Citizen," 15th December, 1927.

On the reassembling of Parliament the members of St. Joan's Alliance were well to the fore in the parade around the Houses of Parliament, organised by the equal Political Rights Campaign Committee. They wore the usual sandwich boards with "Votes for Women on the same terms as Men" and carried umbrellas bearing the slogan "Votes for Women at 21."

As they assembled a host of photographers swooped down upon them and photographed them at every angle and position showing that the press boycott has completely broken down. After smilingly submitting to the attention of these gentlemen the procession marched for two hours outside the Houses of Parliament, being very well received by an interested crowd of watchers despite the bad weather. Most of the evening papers and many of the west-end cinemas showed pictures of the demonstration.—*Poster Parade.*

We ask our members to pray for Kate Wadham, one of the early members of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society who died on November 6th and for her sister Alice Johnson who died on July 6th. R.I.P.

Notes and Comments

CHRISTMAS NIGHT

"This aye night, this aye night,
Star, and moon and candle-light."

Myriad stars are staring down
On seven stars in Mary's crown.

'Twixt the sky and crescent moon,
Love poured forth as precious boon.

Candle-light, in candle-light,
Word made flesh this very night.

Still the sacred Son shall hold
In outstretched hands the cup of gold.

Still the Bread shall broken be,
Seal of this Nativity.

Christine Spender

* * *
The above brings Christmas greetings from
The Catholic Citizen to its readers all over the
world.

* * *
The following resolution was passed by the
British Commonwealth League (to which St.
Joan's Alliance is affiliated) at its meeting in
London on October 29th:

At the time when efforts are being made to implement the I.L.O. Convention on Equal Remuneration for Men and Women for Work of Equal Value, the Standing Committee of the British Commonwealth League, representing affiliated societies in all parts of the Commonwealth deplores the action of the Australian Federation of Employers in seeking through the Arbitration Courts to reduce the proportion of the women's basic wage rates from 75 per cent. to 60 per cent. of the men's rates, and warmly supports Australian women in their protests against this retrograde action.

The resolution was sent to the Australian Federation of Employers in Melbourne, Adelaide and Sydney; to the Australian High Commissioner in London.

* * *
Attending a recent luncheon of the Light Clothing Federation in London Mr. H. A. Watkinson, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Labour, said that women and girls formed about a third of our working population in civil employment and were "definitely in the ascendant." Men had to face the fact that women had invaded many of their preserves and could beat them, or at least equal them, at their own game. "It is no good wrapping ourselves up in our old anti-feminist cloaks and burking the facts," he said. "The old line of demarcation between men's work and women's work has shifted a little in the last few years, and it may well be that some men in the future will have to reconcile themselves to doing jobs in industry traditionally reserved for women."

Josephine Butler was the subject of a well-attended Meeting on November 20th at the Holy Child Convent, Cavendish Square, when Miss Chave Collisson of the Association of Moral and Social Hygiene was the speaker. Lady Pakenham said she felt it a great honour to be in the chair. She was reminded of Lady Astor's remark that Josephine Butler was worth a hundred Florence Nightingales. Yet both these noble reformers possessed great beauty and many social graces and both took up work from which they were discouraged, though nothing stopped them. Lady Pakenham added that principles based on expediency were bound in the end to go off the rails, in spite of good intentions. Perhaps in England we were now beginning to move away from a materialistic outlook to more spiritual values. Without this move the work of Josephine Butler could not be concluded. The substance of Miss Collisson's moving and vivid speech will be found in the front-page article.

After some stimulating questions had been put to Miss Collisson, Lady Pakenham thanked her for a most brilliant talk and a vote of thanks to the speakers was proposed by Miss Challoner and seconded by Mrs. Halpern.

Our thanks go to the Reverend Mother for allowing us to use the Holy Child Convent.

* * *
We are grateful to Lord Samuel for raising the question of the admission of women to the House of Lords on November 25th. He asked if the Government could say when action would be taken to carry out the undertaking given by Mr. Churchill in the Conservative manifesto at the last General Election that an all-party Conference on Lords reform would be called.

Lord Samuel said that the present Constitution of the House was quite indefensible. There were now eight hundred and eighty members and on the present basis in a few years there would be a thousand. Of these roughly one quarter were appointed and the rest sat as hereditary peers. It was the only Chamber in the world which retained the character of medieval parliaments in respect of the hereditary principle.

With a Queen on the throne, women members of the House of Commons and the professions open to women, it was surely an anomaly that there should be one body, and that a House of Parliament, from which women were excluded.

Earl Jowett said that it was wrong not to have women members.

Lord Salisbury said it was the Government's intention to call an all-party Conference on the reform of the Second Chamber as soon as matters relating to the financial position improved. The Conference might be called sooner than Lord Samuel expected.

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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Man Today

Some reflections on reading a book entitled "Woman Today"

What are women for? After reading Father John Fitzsimon's interesting and enlightening book on the subject, I lost myself in a fascinating meditation. What are men for? We know so well what women are for, but men? Well of course, we can say straight away that—besides their notorious and much appreciated activities—men are useful for moving the large wardrobe out of the spare room—on a Saturday afternoon—and down three flights of narrow stairs. Then men can quite often be offered up as a mortification during Lent, for all sorts of reasons. It is indeed comforting to learn from this book *Woman Today** that men are no longer for tying women up in sacks and throwing them into the Bosphorus. It is also a relief to think that, in many countries today, few men are actually for buying and selling their wives; no doubt sometimes not being above 'making a bit' on the transaction. Men still seem to be for arguing pertinently against paying hard-working women the rate for their job. But let women take heart. A few more years, no doubt, shall roll, and then the bright day will surely dawn when a working-woman will not be told firmly and fairly kindly that she ought to be content, she is getting a wonderful wage 'for a woman.' Justice is indeed in gradual if somewhat uphill process of being done to women. But we are considering men. A man still likes to be waited on, hand and foot, by a woman. Almost any woman, if she will do it, but preferably, of course, one to whom he can feel quite free to speak his mind on the ways of laundries and the ways of wives who will tidy up and put things away in improbable places. Then, again, it is man, proud man, who has to wait for woman. Cooling his heels the ordeal is called. His heels, he complains, are stone-cold,

**Woman Today.* By John Fitzsimons (Sheed and Ward, 8s. 6d.).

and he is under the impression that it took him exactly three minutes to shave, to don those garments so lovingly cleaned, repaired and laid out in order of sequence, to fix the—to a woman's eye—incredibly complicated assortment of studs, links, buttons, braces, sock-suspenders, shoe-laces, to say nothing of a new kind of tie-pin that takes a lot of understanding. Man, we learn from this book, seldom blushes. But then—why should he? Man, we also learn from this book, is decisive, firm, logical, and—should he choose to remain unmarried—he is not, fortunate man, such a dangerous and complex problem to himself as is apparently a woman. That must indeed be a wonderful advantage. He is just unmarried, that's all. No fuss about it. Nothing at all sinister. Man, of course, does everything far better than woman. Men are ordinary human-beings. Occasionally men are geniuses. Women are always somehow rather strange, but never exactly geniuses. Not quite. Not like men are. Men are certainly very good for deciding what women are for. Men lay down the laws. They make wars, and—Heaven help us—they also make peace-treaties. Men invent clever things for women. Things like cooking-stoves whose oven-doors are cunningly so placed that cooking is a perfect torment. And kitchen-sinks that can only be used with any comfort by ever such sweet little, tiny women, all of them only four-feet ten or under. Until very recently, except for a little rudimentary teaching and nursing, men saw to it that women were kept almost entirely dependent, and when women dared to protest, they were promptly told they were unwomanly. Until very recently women gave birth to men's children. A remarkable feat, if you come to think of it. The children, surprisingly enough, belonged exclusively to their fathers. Women just obliged men by having

their children. Men can do a job of work, any work, without a lot of heart-rending sentimentality about masculine hands not being made to do rough work. Why should what is honest toil for a man, be practically a return to primitive slavery for a woman? Men, this book says, are creators. Women, presumably, just take the orders. Men, it seems, are much keener on being educated than women. They are far, far more likely to want to stay on at school after the age of fourteen. When women are religious, they are religious in a much more emotional, superstitious, unbalanced way than men. One has to be very careful about women being religious. It's quite different from men being religious. Women like to gossip. Men, of course, never gossip. Oh no! Men in authority over women are much kinder than women in authority over women. Unlike the men, the women in authority so easily become hard and unyielding. Oh Father Fitzsimons! You cannot really believe that! Not that men in authority are kinder than women in authority. Please, please make a few more enquiries. Well—it's plain that life for women is pretty tough. There are so many pitfalls. Men don't have so many pitfalls. They can just be free to go along, having quite a lot of fun. But women! There is one perfectly awful pitfall, according to this book. It's called the state of a woman's mind. Especially the state of an unmarried woman's mind. In fact, according to the book, one quite shudders to think how dreadful the state of an unmarried woman's mind can become, if she is not on the *qui vive* all the time. But—there is some comfort—if it is not the Will of Almighty God that she should be given the vocation of wife and mother—she does not lose her duty to fulfil her feminine mission in the world. She ought to be very grateful for that. There is no doubt that the curse of Eve is worked out in odd and diverse ways.

Mary Grace Ashton

CHRISTMAS SALE

The Christmas Sale brought in the welcome sum of £89 towards balancing the yearly account. We thank particularly those who helped in the dressing of the stalls, in the selling of goods and with refreshments. There is still a selection of goods suitable for Christmas presents and anyone who cares to call at 55 Berners Street can make their choice and shop in peace. We hope that the target of £100 will be reached by the end of December and all donations to this end will be thankfully received.

The verses printed in this issue may be obtained as a Christmas card from the office—6d. each with envelope.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES

Brazil.—From a correspondent we learn that the movement for women police is well on the way to success. General Cyro R. Rezende is now convinced of their worth, and Redencao (the chief promoter of this reform) is about to found a school for women police candidates.

L'Alianza Santa Joanna d'Arc has co-operated wholeheartedly with Redencao. Senora Lisboa is the moving spirit of both these organisations.

* * *

Switzerland.—All the women of Geneva over twenty were eligible to take part in a poll in the city over the week-end, to discover whether or not they wanted the suffrage extended to them. Only fifty-eight per cent. of those eligible to vote went to the poll—35,133 in favour, 6,346 against.

* * *

Transvaal.—The Secretary of the Transvaal Section of St. Joan's Alliance, in her Report to St. Joan's International Council Meeting, writes: "Delegates will know with what difficulties we are faced: that the authority of the Supreme Court is threatened; freedom of movement is being denied to African peoples and a policy of migrating labour is undermining their family life . . . and that the new Draft Education Ordinance (Transvaal) gives the governing body the right to interfere with Catholic schools and even to close such schools without giving reasons why nor permitting them to appeal against the action." The Report continues: "Every member of the Transvaal Section is actively engaged in social and political work which aims at defending the freedoms and preserving the rights of all sections of the population. . . . The Section is continuing to support the fight of the Transvaal Married Teachers' Association for just conditions of employment. . . . At all times members will keep a watchful eye for occasions on which the Section may act, and will keep informed, so that when the day comes when we may be more active, we shall be prepared."

* * *

U.S.A.—Mr. Eisenhower, President-elect has chosen the first two women to have appointments in his administration. They are Mrs. Oveta Culp Hobby of Houston, Texas, who is to be Administrator of the Federal Security Agency, and Mrs. Ivy Baker Priest of Bountiful, Utah, to be Treasurer of the United States. Mrs. Hobby was head of the Women's Army Corps during the war, holding the rank of colonel. She is editor and owner of the Houston Post. She has two children. Mrs. Priest, mother of three children, succeeds another woman as Treasurer. Her signature will appear on dollar bills along with that of Secretary to the Treasury.

THE MONTH IN PARLIAMENT

From November 4th to November 24th

On November 4th the Queen opened the new Parliament in State; a moving and beautiful foreshadowing of all the Royal Pageantry to come in 1953. The Debate on the Address lasted until the 11th, and covered Foreign and Colonial affairs and the Economic situation. Other than this, the most important debate has been on the controversial Transport Bill (17th and 18th). Other topics discussed have been Colonial Loans, and the Shops Closing Hours.

Among the Private Members' Bills which have been lucky in the Ballot there are two of special interest: the Abortion Bill "to amend the Law relating to Abortion," presented by Mr. Reeves and supported, among others, by Mrs. Corbet (27th February), and the Women's Disabilities Bill "to remove certain legal disabilities of women," presented by Dr. Summerskill and supported by Mr. Janner and Dr. King. (Friday 13th February—let us hope it does not prove an unlucky date!).

Among the points raised in Questions were a number of interest to us. On November 12th Mrs. White asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies what provision is made for secondary education for Africans in Nyasaland; and how many boys and girls, respectively, were receiving such education at the latest convenient date. Mr. Lyttelton replied: "There are three African secondary schools which provide a four-year course leading to school certificate. Two are financed by the Government and controlled by Boards of Governors. The third is entirely under Government control and provides technical as well as academic courses. There are 222 boys and eight girls at these schools. There are, in addition, eight private junior secondary schools providing education up to standard eight; details of enrolment for the present scholastic year are not yet available." Next day Mrs. White obtained further details on the subject. These included the fact that the children passing the Grade VI (senior) examination in 1945 consisted of 113 boys and no girls, while in 1952 there were 459 boys and 29 girls.

On the same day (November 13th) Major Lloyd asked the Prime Minister "whether he will call an all party conference during the present session of Parliament to consider the reform of the House of Lords." The Prime Minister replied: "My hon. and gallant Friend may rest assured that we shall take steps to call the conference to which his question refers as soon as other matters of greater urgency in the present state of national affairs have been despatched." Mr. Ellis Smith pursued: "Will the Prime Minister bear in mind that over 100

members on this side of the House signed a motion saying that this party would have nothing to do with such a conference?" to which Mr. Churchill retorted: "I thought that year by year they were taking an increasing interest in the House of Lords." The same question, with particular reference to the incongruity of not allowing peeresses to take their seats, while there is a queen on the throne and women members in the House of Commons, was raised in the House of Lords by Lord Samuel, on November 25th.

On November 13th, also, Sir Ian Fraser asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer: "What estimate he has made of the cost to the Exchequer of making an Income Tax allowance of £50 a year to all parents whose children attend independent schools and thus relieve public funds of the cost of their education." Mr. Boyd-Carpenter replied "£7 million a year."

During the Debate on the Address, on November 4th, Mr. David Logan made a moving appeal on behalf of the Catholic laity for reconsideration of the Education Act (an Amending Bill is being brought forward). He started by deprecating too close a comparison between the reigns of Elizabeth I and Elizabeth II, pointing out that if he had been living in the reign of the former he would have been in the Tower. Speaking of education and the voluntary schools he went on to say: "The destiny of every party depends upon the way in which we deal with this important subject," and: "It is fundamental that we should have teachers and schools able to impart the knowledge of God and His teachings."

B. M. Halpern

HERE AND THERE

There are some others who think very strongly that it would add to the Church's prestige if every Catholic who is a public figure should think exactly alike on any given subject regardless of how secular the topic may be. They would argue that it be best to bury the differences of opinions even if they did fester and result in untold harm. There are some who demand that those with whom they disagree have no right to call themselves Catholics and will insist that these Catholics be clamped down on and silenced. You shouldn't have to have pictures drawn for you to see how dreadful and unwholesome this situation would become if some of these people have their way. Certainly there exists on their part a complete misapprehension regarding the definition of the spirit of freedom existing within the teachings of the Catholic Church.—"The Catholic Worker," U.S.A.

REVIEWS

Bede Jarrett of the Order of Preachers. By Kenneth Wykeham-George, O.P., and Gervase Mathew, O.P. (Blackfriars, 12s. 6d.).

A large number of Catholics born before 1914 will remember Fr. Bede Jarrett—his sermons, lectures, retreats. He was born in 1881 to a Catholic military family, and died in 1934, having been Provincial of the English Dominicans for four successive periods of office, and left his imprint on the work of his Order, and a widely-felt mark on Catholics of this country.

In this short book, the authors, who were among his close personal friends, while sketching his works, have chosen rather to concentrate on his personality. That is, perhaps, why so much space is given to aims and projects, for they reflect his ideals. Ideals is the word; for what could not be achieved with *veritas*, the motto of his Order, and *caritas*, the mark of every Christian? It was characteristic of Fr. Bede Jarrett to underestimate failings and difficulties. His own love of truth brought him deeply to appreciate disinterested scholarship in others, made Oxford a formative influence in his life, and led to his own historical works; the development of University work among Dominicans and the foundation of Blackfriars at Oxford stand out now, in the perspective of the years, as his most important contribution to Catholic life. But during his life-time he was also the popular preacher, the missionary, the protagonist of parish work for his Order, the champion of the oppressed, the man of quick friendship and sympathy, of compassion, working tirelessly because he cared deeply.

The authors might have portrayed Fr. Bede Jarrett for us as the historian, the administrator, the preacher or pastor. Instead, with great understanding and an economical and careful choice of words and quotation, they have given us a glimpse of the sources of his strength and we are left with the impression of a man of Christ, animated with a Christo-centric spirituality and a recognition of God's will as His love. For this reason, the work is not only interesting as biography and history, but also inspiring.

One small slip—Fr. Bede Jarrett is referred to as "President" of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, whereas he was a friend and supporter. It is not difficult to see in his general attitude the grounds for his support—*veritas*, *caritas*, a feeling for first principles, a hatred of injustice. He saw the "feminist movement" as standing for "a positive claim to be wholly all that one was capable of becoming."

Christian Hardy

Learning Laughter. By Stephen Spender. (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 15s.).

The organizers of the Youth Aliyah—the body which has cared for 60,000 children brought to Israel from all over the world—invited Stephen Spender to write about their work. This delightfully readable book, based on the journals of his tour in Israel in the spring of this year, is the outcome. Stephen Spender calls it a "travel book with a theme." One could also call it impressions and meditations. It approaches the phenomenal and exciting experiment of modern Israel by way of its children, and follows them from the concentration camps of Europe and the starving slums of North Africa and the Middle East to their brand-new, idealistic, precarious future.

The book is full of vivid description and scrupulously balanced comment. In fact my only criticism of it is that it is almost too well balanced. Somehow impartiality seems out of place in this harsh, fascinating, kill-or-cure gamble of a country where they say that "the man who *doesn't* believe in miracles is not a realist." It is a place so full of paradoxes, so full of violent growth, that, paradoxically enough, only a violent partisan (friend or enemy) and not a civilised, humane man like Stephen Spender, can really do it justice.

For us, however, Stephen Spender is at his best in the "meditations" induced by what he sees and hears. He is generous, thoughtful and stimulating and particularly interesting on the question of the Jewish religion and its place in the new state. In general this book gives a fascinating picture of an adventure which is far too little known over here; an adventure some times repellent to the reflective but still a challenge to those who may feel that Christendom, no less than Hitlerism, has much to be humble about when considering the history of the Jews.

B. M. Halpern

The Catholic Book of Marriage. By The Rev. P. C. M. Kelly, C.S.C. (Longmans, 6s.).

If parish priests had limitless means, they would stock this as they do hymn books and give to all who come "for the banns." Eminently practical and all-inclusive (from Nuptial Mass to Family Record), giving sound doctrine (dogmatic and moral), pertinent advice on dangers (spiritual, corporal and even financial); texts on marriage and life; prayers; letters . . . simple, over-sentimental, repetitive, it is what the title claims—the Catholic (nothing left out) book of Marriage.

G.M.C.

FOUND a home. Thank you Blessed Cuthbert Mayne. Welch, Eddy.

The Imitation of Christ. By Thomas a Kempis.
(Burns, Oates, 8s. 6d.)

This is a new translation by the Rt. Rev. Abbot Justin McCann, O.S.B. Abbot McCann has written a preface giving a brief outline of the life of the author of the Imitation, and how the book came to be written. There is an index which enables the reader to concentrate on special points.

EQUAL MORAL STANDARD IN GREECE

A report from the Greek League for Women's Rights given by the Equal Moral Standard Commission of the Naples Congress of the International Alliance of Women is published in the *International Women's News*. The report states that there are still Maisons Tolerées and that there is still registration of prostitutes—who have to undergo medical examination twice a week. A Committee of five is responsible for classifying the women and this Committee has the right to authorise the opening or closing of new Houses and of regulating the economic transactions between the women and the brothel keepers. At the same time the Committee of five endeavours to rescue the prostitutes and to suggest competent measures to fight the traffic in women and venereal disease. An impossible situation full of contradictions.

Nevertheless there is a tendency towards the abolition of regulation which is embodied in a circular issued by the Minister of the Interior last February discouraging the registration of prostitutes and forbidding the registration of those under twenty-two. A later circular issued in May insists on the strict application of the first, and the Central Committee has decided not to open further tolerated Houses and gradually to abolish those which exist.

In Athens in 1947 there were thirty Maisons Tolerées. Today there remain only eighteen.

MOTHER KEVIN'S NEW CONGREGATION

The Congregation of Franciscan Missionary Sisters, who work in conjunction with the Fathers of St. Joseph's Missionary Society in Uganda and with the Holy Ghost Fathers in Kenya—has now been canonically erected by the Holy See to form a new Congregation, *iuris pontificii*. The Constitutions of this new Congregation make the scope of the work entirely missionary in character. Mother Kevin, a well-known pioneer of missionary work in Africa, has been appointed by the Holy See as first Superior General of the new Congregation. The Franciscan Sisters first arrived in Uganda in January, 1903, and since then they have rendered very great service to the peoples of East Africa, educationally and medically. The new Congregation has twenty-three houses in East Africa.

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