

THE
CATHOLIC CITIZEN

VOLUME XIV, 1928.



ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE,
55 BERNERS STREET, LONDON, W.1.

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Catholic Citizen

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

Vol. XIV, No. 1.

15th JANUARY, 1927.

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.

Message from the Reverend Dom. Gilbert Higgins, C.R.L.

To the Editor of the *Catholic Citizen*,

I know of nothing better calculated to make a woman feel happy at the beginning of a New Year than a sure and certain hope that the status and conditions of her sisters is going to improve during the coming twelve months. This hope once as small as that of France's deliverance in the babyhood of the Maid of Domremy, has become greater, brighter, more encouraging since the foundation of "St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance." The mustard seed has grown into a tree through the energy, tact and patient plodding of the members of this Guild (and others) whom the example of the heroine of Orleans has filled with the noble ambition of breaking down the last obstacles that stand between the Catholic Sisters of St. Joan and women's complete and indefeasible rights. Victory is in sight but it advances slowly. What is wanting to make it move forward, more swiftly, is an increasing realization of the dignity of womanhood and a determination to defend the same by all legitimate means. Amongst these means St. Joan's Alliance holds a high and a well-earned position with all who know. It cannot fail to enlist the sympathies and the co-operation (through membership), of the enthusiastic and practical clients of its glorious and womanly patroness.

Your obedient servant,

Gilbert Higgins, C.R.L.

What the Vote Means to Me.

By NANCY STEWART PARNELL, B.A.

In a few weeks from now the Prime Minister will be introducing his long-promised Equal Franchise bill. When this bill is under discussion much will be made of the keenness or apathy of the five million women whom it so largely concerns. At the present moment some of the younger women seem indifferent to the whole question of the franchise because they do not realise how much is at stake. Unfortunately for them, they have grown up under the shadow of the Great War and they have not received that magnificent education in political service and citizenship which the suffragists gave women throughout the length and breadth of England in the years before 1914.

They do not realise, for example, what wonderful good they could achieve for the poor and suffering had they the vote; not so much, perhaps, by the direct exercise of their vote, as by the political power that comes from its possession. Unfortunately, no ordinary newspaper records for them the growing list of what one might call "women's bills"—bills conceived, and worked for, and won by organised bodies of women voters like our own St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance. A good example of this type of bill is the Widows' Pensions Act. Who would not be glad and proud to have had some share in relieving the lot of thousands of poor widows with children dependent upon them—and not only the widows of to-day but the widows of the future? For many years the suffragists set their hearts on gaining this beneficent reform for their harassed sister-women, but it was not until they had votes that they were able to induce Parliament to put it into operation. Many such political works of mercy remain to be done and the unenfranchised ought to want the vote so that they might help the less happy and the less fortunate than themselves.

But votes are not only instruments by which good may be accomplished for others, but weapons, also, for our own protection. Women in the professions, in commerce, and in industry need the vote as never before, because their conditions of work, their pay, their status, their very rights of entry are

in the melting-pot. Unless they have the political power and status that comes from the possession of a vote, their claims and arguments and interests are in grave danger of being overlooked, especially when Parliament is invoked to settle the matters at issue, as happens again and again. Only recently young women have been excluded from yet another occupation in which they bid fair to make good, namely house decorating and painting. By the provisions of the Lead Paint Bill no women apprentices may be taken in the future, though no cases of lead poisoning have so far occurred among the present women decorators and painters. No one listened to the protests of the latter because so few of them had votes, and few members of Parliament probably gave a thought to those other young women who might wish to take up this attractive work in the near future. In the teaching profession the views of women are always of less account in the eyes of the government which employs them than those of men, because the women, being largely voteless, have not equal political influence with their male colleagues. Statistics show that only one in fifteen of the women in industry have a vote and yet it is in industrial occupations that government intervention is most common. For their protection, therefore, young women need the vote.

Some of the unenfranchised women (and most of their critics) fail to realise that a very grave injustice is being done to them by the government when it accepts their taxes but refuses them a parliamentary vote, because it is a long-conceded principle of the English constitution that there should be "no taxation without representation." All these five million unenfranchised women contribute to the revenue in one form or another, either directly, as through income-tax, or indirectly as through the purchase of those innumerable goods on which there are duties. Being tax-payers on exactly the same terms as men they ought to return representatives to Parliament to control the expenditure of their money just as men, and

(Continued on page 5).

Notes and Comments.

Once again we beg all our readers to come to the "King's Speech Meeting" to be held at Caxton Hall at 8 p.m., on February 8. The meeting is under the auspices of the Equal Political Rights Campaign Committee. (See the advertisement page). We firmly believe that the Prime Minister will honour his pledge, but we must stick to our posts until the Bill is safely on the Statute Book. As Lady Rhondda says in her message to *The Vote*, "whether we do so or not (that is win equal franchise) may even yet largely depend on the vigilance and energy of the women's organisations."

* * * *

The fact that the Prime Minister, as announced in the *Woman's Leader*, has promised to speak at the Equal Franchise Demonstration to be held at the Queen's Hall, on March 8, is indeed a hopeful sign. This meeting, as we have already announced, is being organised by the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship. St. Joan's S.P.A. is co-operating in the meeting and a block of (1s.) seats is being reserved for members. Application should be made at once to 55 Berner's Street. There is to be Community singing, conducted by Mr. Martin Shaw.

* * * *

We are glad to see that Mrs. Wintringham has been definitely adopted again as Liberal candidate for Louth; she is a friend whom we should be glad indeed to see once more in the House.

* * * *

Dame Janet Campbell's report, recently published, calls attention once again to the high rate of maternal mortality. Dame Janet, as our readers may know, is senior medical officer for maternity and child welfare to the Ministry of Health. She states that one mother dies for every 250 children born. It seems that the lives of many of these women could be saved by adequate nursing and medical attention. Apart from the inhumanity, this unnecessary loss of life, and unnecessary suffering; is undoubtedly false economy.

In a note on homelike houses, the *Universe* hopes that new dwellings and colleges will be built by the many women who have taken to architecture and know what a home should be like, within as well as without. We cordinally agree, for indeed the housewife has suffered much at the hands of the architect.

* * * *

Our member, Miss Tessa de Alberti, has been appointed by the Attorney General, U.S.A., as assistant to the Doctor at the Federal Industrial Institution for Women, Alderson, Virginia, and was sworn into office on November 17. We hope later on that Miss de Alberti will send us details of this interesting experiment in prison reform, just started in the U.S.A.

* * * *

Mrs. Laughton Mathews, M.B.E., has been invited by the South Hackney Liberal Association to stand as a Candidate for the L.C.C. at the election next March. Mrs. Laughton Mathews was on the Executive Committee of St. Joan's S.P.A., until she went to Japan a few years ago, and we hope as many members as possible will turn out to help her in the Election. She will be specially grateful to anyone who can lend a car for polling day; canvassers and helpers in the office will also be urgently needed.

* * * *

For Members of St. Joan's S.P.A.

The Annual Meeting will be held on March 17th. Resolutions for the Agenda and Nominations for Committee, duly proposed and seconded, must reach the Hon. Secretary, at 55 Berners Street, W. 1., on February 6th. Nominations cannot be accepted unless the consent of the nominee has been obtained. Members are asked to take this as the official notice.

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE,

AND

Editorial Office of "Catholic Citizen":

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

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

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The Work of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance.

The first number of the *Catholic Citizen* of 1928, is definitely a propaganda number. The *Catholic Citizen* needs new subscribers, St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance new members. Our paper has a special message of its own, and we know that its message has carried to many a lonely fighter in different parts of the world. We know, none better, that there are Catholics, worthy and pious Catholics, who are apt to confound their own prejudice with Catholic doctrine, and woe betide the Catholic pioneer who crosses their path. It has been the aim of the *Catholic Citizen* to help these lonely fighters in far lands.

St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, too, holds a unique position among Catholics, being a definitely political body of Catholic women (men are admitted as associates), banded together to secure political, social and economic equality between men and women and to further the work and usefulness of Catholic women as citizens. The Alliance makes a special study of social problems, and fearlessly exposes evils, which it has been the custom to ignore. The chief aim of the Alliance from its earliest days has been equal franchise. We believe that equal franchise will be won this year, after a fight of over sixty years. But there are other battles to win. Feminist societies, and ourselves among them, are uniting to win freedom for women in industry, and

for married women the right to decide for themselves whether or no they shall engage in paid labour.

An equal moral standard for men and women, is another of the Alliance's objects, and one which should make an appeal to Catholics. It includes the abolition of state regulation of vice, the repeal of the present unjust Solicitation Laws, the protection of young boys and girls. The Alliance makes a special study of all these questions, and appeals for new labourers to help in the good work.

St. Joan's S.P.A. is affiliated to the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship, pledged to obtain the vote for women all the world over; and the *Catholic Citizen* goes to many foreign societies.

We have to offer our cordial thanks to Dom Gilbert Higgins for his inspiring message, and to Miss Nancy Stewart Parnell for her lucid explanation of the value of the vote. Miss Parnell is one of our brilliant "under-thirties." We are fortunate enough to possess a number of young members in whom we take great pride, and who are our hope for the future. We make a special appeal to them to make our work known among their friends, and to obtain new subscribers to the *Catholic Citizen*. We hope 1928 will bring us many new workers, and new victories. L. de Alberti.

International Notes.

The Dawn (Perth) announces that the Senate of Sydney University has received a deputation from the Women Citizens' Associations of New South Wales who asked for increased opportunities for post-graduate instruction in obstetrics and for consideration for the suggestion that a special diploma should be given in obstetrics, in order to raise the status in the university of this most important subject which the undergraduate is now apt to despise. They also asked that there should be increased hospital accommodation for maternity cases. They urged that provisions for the fulfilment of their demands should constitute a first call on the University's purse.

* * * *

La Bonne Parole, (Montreal), the organ of the National Federation of St. John the Baptist, publishes an article on the desirability of granting pensions to widowed mothers of young children. Such pensions are granted by law in the province of Alberta, British Columbia, Ontario and Saskatchewan, but the efforts to introduce them in Montreal Province have hitherto failed.

* * * *

La Ligue des Femmes, which is the organ of the Belgian Catholic Women's League, emphasizes the urgent need for the abolition of the state regulation of vice.

* * * *

We congratulate our contemporary, *Franciscans in China*, on having emerged from the chrysalis, typed-sheet stage to that of a real printed paper, published by the Franciscan Press in Shanghai. An article on "Chinese Virgins" contains most interesting information about the evangelizing work done by Chinese laywomen, often with heroic courage. We learn that four religious communities for Chinese women only have recently been founded in China, and that several European convents in the country now admit Chinese women.

* * * *

Maria de Hispalis contributes to the *Acción Católica de la Mujer* (Madrid), an interesting article. "Sixteen women," she

says, "have seats in the National Consultative Assembly. They have been carefully chosen: they are teachers, social workers, aristocrats, working women, presidents of associations, etc.—in fact, women of prestige in the various spheres in which they are active."

H. D. I.

What the Vote Means to Me. (Continued from p. 2.)

many of the older women, do, but at present this fundamental right is denied them. Probably, some young women would be surprised and shocked to hear that out of every pound they pay in taxation 14s. is spent in paying for past or future wars and only a fraction of a penny on the League of Nations!

Other conspicuously unjust features of the present franchise laws are the capricious exclusion of some two million women over 30 years of age on the grounds that they have no furniture of their own, and the equally capricious postponement of the women graduate's right to exercise her university vote until she is 30, whereas her male colleague may exercise his at 21. These are very irritating cases, but to the intelligent young women of to-day the whole idea of an unequal franchise is unfair and derogatory. It is especially aggravating to learn that England stands almost alone in this matter, for, of the thirty odd countries that have enfranchised their women, only this country and Hungary have given the vote on unequal terms to their men and women. One cannot help wondering in what respects young Englishwomen are inferior to their continental or American sisters?

But the demand for equal franchise should spring from deeper motives than any of the foregoing. Young women should realise that equal franchise is not an end in itself but, as it were, the foundation upon which great structures may be reared. For, upon a basis of equal citizenship, equal status and opportunities will arise and an equal moral standard become possible. Completely enfranchised, women would have for the first time the political power to make the world fit for their children to live in and to bring about that universal peace for which for centuries they have yearned.

A Nineteenth Century Foundress.

EUGENIE SMET. Adapted from the French by Caroline C. Morewood. Sands & Co. 16s.

Eugénie Smet, whose history is here recorded, was, like many remarkable men and women, dominated from childhood by one idea, which increased in intensity as she grew older, and finally materialised. In her case, the idea was purely spiritual and altruistic.

The child of good Catholic parents, she became possessed, before she was seven years old, with a veritable passion of affection and pity for the suffering souls in Purgatory. The fruit of this was, first, an association of prayer, then the formation of an Order, the Congregation of the Helpers of the Holy Souls, whose specific object, as defined in their motto, is to "Pray, Suffer and Labour, for the Souls in Purgatory." Besides their prayers, the Helpers offer any merits of the work they do amongst the poor as suffrages on behalf of the suffering souls.

Strangely enough, though, of course, the Church as a whole intercedes for the departed, no institution dedicated to this particular work existed previously, and it was reserved for the latest Order to undertake it. In the seventy years that have passed since its inauguration in Paris, branches have been established not only in other parts of France, but in Belgium, Italy, Austria, Spain, Switzerland, Holland, China, the United States, England and Scotland, and steps, it is understood, are being taken to introduce at Rome the cause of the Beatification of the foundress.

As can easily be imagined, Eugénie Smet did not achieve her results without overcoming formidable difficulties. First, there was her own natural reluctance to recognise as her vocation the stupendous task of founding a new Order, then opposition from some of her directors, desertion by supporters, poverty, hard and uncomfortable conditions of life, war, the siege of Paris, a terrible illness that ended her life at forty-five. The one who gave her most encouragement was, perhaps, St. Jean Baptiste de Vianney, the Curé d'Arns, whom she never met in person.

Though she established her first house in Paris, Eugénie was, in fact, a Belgian, born in 1825 of a prosperous family living at Lille. She had a happy and delightful home, and the thought of leaving it was so painful to her that, though she never forgot her early conception of the society she afterwards promoted, for a time she occupied herself in active works of charity and in forming the association of prayer for the Holy Souls. These failed to satisfy and, at last, on her thirty-first birthday she tore herself away from her beloved family and started her foundation in miserable temporary quarters in Paris. A little later, inspired by faith rather than by any certainty of being able to pay the rent, the small community moved to premises in the rue de la Barouillère, where, in January 1858, they made their vows, Eugénie Smet becoming Mère Marie de la Providence. It was not till 1878, seven years after the death of the foundress, that the Order was canonically approved by Pope Leo XIII. The first daughter house was opened at

Nantes in 1865, the call to the Chinese mission followed. The Helpers came to London in 1873 and made a small beginning in Queen Anne Street, from which has sprung Holy Rood House in Regent's Park, besides other houses in the country and in Scotland.

The new biography well describes the arduous labours of Mère Marie de la Providence, and also leaves a clear impression of her personality. With great force of character and practical ability, she combined childlike faith and devotion and a vivid and literal belief in prayer, recalling St. Thérèse of Lisieux.

W. P.

* * * *

New Year's Party.

On Monday, February 6, at 8 p.m., a New Year's Party in aid of the funds of the *Catholic Citizen* will take place at Caxton Hall.

The party is to be held to give members an opportunity of meeting socially, but in addition we are to have short speeches from His Lordship the Bishop of Pella, Mrs. Laughton Mathews, and the Hon. Mrs. Walter Roch, if she is in England.

A charming programme of music etc., has been arranged. The artists will be Miss Harley Bacon who will again enchant us with her 'cello playing; Miss Felia Dorio, the famous Swiss mezzo-contralto, so well known on the Continent and in this country, and Viscountess Dupplin, so well known to Catholic concert-goers, will sing. Miss Eleanor Fitzgerald will tell her inititable stories, and Mr. Jean Baptiste Toner, the distinguished pianist, will play. Messrs. Ibach have kindly consented to supply the piano.

The London Sea Guides will sing Sea Shanties, Character Delineations will also be given, and refreshments will be provided. The cost of tickets inclusive will be 3s. 6d. Evening dress is optional.

We hope all members will make a special effort to be present, and will write at once for tickets for themselves and their friends. Much trouble is saved to the organisers by promptitude in application. This is an opportunity to bring friends in touch with St. Joan's S.P.A. and to explain its objects.

M. Fedden,

Hon. Treas. *Catholic Citizen*.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH.

Hon. Sec.: Miss N. S. Parnell, B.A., 45 Falkner Street, Liverpool.

To augment our funds a social was held on December 12, consisting of competitions, a draw for a cake, refreshments, and a short concert, which realised £1 6s. after all expenses had been paid. Our best thanks are due to our hostess, Mrs. Murphy, and to all those who contributed to the success of the evening.

The Annual Meeting was held on January 3 at 66 Park Road South, Birkenhead (by kind invitation of Miss Barry). After the adoption of the Hon. Secretary's Report and the Treasurer's Statement (which showed a balance in hand of £7 odd), the elections were held, and resulted as follows: Chairman, Mrs. Murphy; Vice-Chairman, Mrs. Parnell; Treasurer and Paper Secretary, Miss McCurdy, B.A.; Hon. Secretary, Miss N. S. Parnell, B.A.; Committee—Mrs. Gordon, Miss Crawford, Miss Jervis, Miss Hall, B.Sc., Miss Johnstone, Miss McCurdle. Resolutions were then passed concerning Equal Franchise, Peeresses in the House of Lords, Equal Pay and Opportunity in the Civil Service, Equal Moral Standard, Women Police, Artificial Birth Control. Miss F. Barry then gave a stimulating review of the year 1927 from the feminist standpoint, and the meeting concluded with refreshments kindly provided by our hostess.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS.

December 1 to 31.

	£	s.	d.
Bain, Miss	...	1	5 0
*Barry, Miss	...	10	0 0
*Busse, Miss	...	7	0 0
Butler-Bowdon, Miss E.	...	3	6 11
Fortey, Miss E. C.	...	2	6
Gordon, Miss C. M.	...	5	0
Hughes, Mrs.	...	4	0
Jeffery, Miss	...	1	10 0
O'Connor, per Miss Monica	...	7	15 6
*Parker, Mrs.	...	2	0 0
Stafford, Miss B.	...	2	6
Wall, Miss	...	1	10 0
Minimum Annual Subscriptions	...	4	0
	£28	12	5

* *Catholic Citizen*.

TREASURER'S NOTE.

Thanks to the energetic work of the Finance Sub-Committee throughout last year, and to our rent collectors, we were able to free the General Fund and *Catholic Citizen* of debt. This is a most satisfactory achievement. For the first time for several years we are able to turn to the work ahead unhandicapped by a legacy of debt from the previous year. Nevertheless, we cannot rest on our oars. There is no balance worth naming in hand for 1928, and all that is necessary to secure us victory must be raised by this year's efforts. Let us make a good start by the punctual payment of our annual subscriptions due on January 1.

Deputation on Age of Marriage.

Extract from a letter from the N.U.S.E.C.

You will remember that on the occasion of the Deputation to the Home Secretary on the Age of Marriage on November 8th, we were asked to form a small committee to consult with Home Office officials as to whether, should the legal minimum age for marriage be raised to 16, marriages below that age should be void or voidable. It was felt that before such a meeting could be held it was necessary to find out the views of women's organisations, and a small sub-committee has been set up, consisting of representatives of the following Societies: British Social Hygiene Council, Mothers Union, National Council of Women, National Council for the Unmarried Mother and her Child, National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, Women's Freedom League, Young Women's Christian Association.

After considering various proposals, including one put forward informally by an official at the Home Office for our consideration, it was agreed to adopt the latter and to recommend that a single one-clause bill should be introduced, raising the age of marriage for both sexes to 16 years. Any person assisting at or taking part in any marriage in which either or both of the contracting parties are under the age of 16, would be guilty of a criminal offence.

* * * *

Annual Subscriptions.

Annual subscriptions to St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance and the "Catholic Citizen" fall due this month. Much labour is saved at the office if subscriptions are sent in good time, we hope all members and subscribers will take note of this. Subscription to "Catholic Citizen," 2/6; the minimum subscription to the Alliance is 1/-, but members are asked to increase their subscriptions as one shilling does not even cover postage of notices in the year.

**ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND
POLITICAL ALLIANCE.**

NON-PARTY.

Office—55, Berners St., Oxford St., London, W.
Patron : Saint Joan of Arc. Colours : Blue, White & Gold

Organ—"The Catholic Citizen," 2d. monthly.

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.

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.

I desire to be enrolled a Member (or Associate) of the St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance.

I enclose annual subscription to:—

- *1 St. Joan's S.P.A. (minimum, 1/-).
- 2 Catholic Citizen (post free, 2/6).

Name.....

State whether Mrs., Miss or Mr.

Full Address.....

*If not subscribing to both please cross out the one that does not apply.

This half should be detached and forwarded with the Subscription to ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE, 55 Berners Street, Oxford Street, London, W.1.

"The Life & Work of Josephine Butler,"

specialy written for the Centenary by Dame Millicent Fawcett. Ready Dec. 17th. Price in paper cover, 1/8; in cloth cover, 2/9, post free. Order now from:—The Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, Orchard House, 14 Great Smith Street, S.W.1.

The International Woman Suffrage News

The Monthly Organ of

THE INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN
FOR SUFFRAGE AND EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

Subscription : 6s. per annum, post free.

At the present time "Jus Suffragii" forms a unique link between the women of all nations. It contains articles, reports and letters from all countries and constitutes a valuable record of woman's activities. Sample copies may be had free of charge on application to the Office—190 Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W. 1.

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