

WOMEN'S SERVICE  
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# THE Catholic Citizen

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

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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.

## St. John of Rochester and St. Thomas More

By JOSEPH CLAYTON

We cannot separate the twain, now, after four hundred years, declared by supreme and infallible authority to be truly saints of God; men of heroic virtue; of that immense charity that belongs to sanctity; possessed, as the large hearted are of that glorious simplicity that is without fear of man; of the high courage that no adversity can shake.

Together they stood for the extension of learning, rejoicing in the revival of letters, famous among the scholars of Europe, bringing honour to their native land by their wisdom and knowledge. Nor was it possible that in England the Renaissance should exalt paganism above the Faith, as it did in Italy and France and in Rome itself, while these our saints were the moving spirits of the new humanism.

Together, when the testing time came and many bishops and abbots and nobles and king's servants fell away, choosing the broad road to safety, these two, St. John, the elder by nearly twenty years, passed into the Tower to climb the craggy way, steep and narrow, the way of the Cross to martyrdom and the fullness of eternal life.

A Yorkshireman, John Fisher, born in that old town of Beverley, where in Saxon times, an earlier St. John had ruled and died in the great monastery. We recognise the characteristics of the Yorkshireman in our St. John of Rochester. Plainness of speech that, when Henry's divorce was first mooted, made him declare that the king could not lawfully put away his wife Katharine and take another. Blunt avowal that rather than consent to the annulment of the king's marriage he was ready to die "like St. John Baptist of old." Yet he could honour the king; preaching a very moving funeral sermon on the piety of that singularly unattractive monarch, Henry VII, first of Tudor kings and

son of Lady Margaret, the queen-mother, who made John, Bishop of Rochester, her spiritual director and so was persuaded to give generously to his own university of Cambridge.

Sir Thomas More is as discernedly of London as his fellow martyr is of Yorkshire. The humour and irony that break in so readily, often so unexpectedly, in the written and spoken word of Sir Thomas More—in the family circle at Chelsea they were sometimes not sure whether he was really in earnest, so gravely was the jest uttered—are still the token of the true born Londoner.

While St. John of Rochester has an enduring memorial in the colleges of Cambridge, St. Thomas More lives in his writings. Since it is no longer possible to exclude the martyred man of letters from the place securely his in the realm of English literature.

Both these great men—holy and humble of heart—strove that others might share the gifts of learning. They believed in education.

We know the pains that St. Thomas took that his daughters might enjoy a generous scholarship; and this at a time in England when opportunities for women to achieve learning were not plentiful. No sex barrier was recognised in that home at Chelsea, that "school for the knowledge and practice of the Christian faith" as Erasmus styled the household presided over by Sir Thomas More. The high enterprise of learning, the exercise of the intellectual life in the study of Greek and Latin—of Latin in especial—was for son and daughter alike. Neither was marriage in the eyes of Sir Thomas More a reason for the neglect of study and the surrender of intellectual interests. The dearest of his children, Margaret, was already the wife of William Roper when her father advised her to take up medicine as well



as divinity. He gives her his reasons in a familiar passage: "though I earnestly hope that you will devote the rest of your life to medical science and sacred literature, so that you may be well furnished for the whole scope of human life, which is to have a healthy soul in a healthy body, and I know that you have already laid the foundations of these studies and there will always be opportunity to continue the building; yet I am of opinion that you may with great advantage give some years of your yet flourishing youth to humane letters and liberal studies."

The purpose and end of this higher education was clear to Sir Thomas More. To achieve *ad majorem gloriam Dei* the full development of the intellect given by God. The obligation to keep the intelligence alert was as binding as the obligation to keep the body in health.

It was not in the cause of education the bishop of Rochester and his friend, the once lord chancellor of England laid down their lives. Primarily it was for the sanctity of Christian marriage, the sacredness of the sacrament of holy matrimony. In the second place for the unity of the Catholic Church.

Others might hesitate, bishops and abbots might supplicate the Pope to set King Henry free from a marriage become after twenty years distasteful. Not so St. John of Rochester, nor St. Thomas More. For them the eternal laws of God were unchangeable. The law of God was written in their hearts. It ruled their lives. And Henry who could not bear that men whom he respected, one of whom he had counted his friend, should cross his will, slew them.

For Catholic and Christian morals first; for the Catholic faith second. That was the order in which they were called to give witness and seal their testimony with their blood.

The Pope's supremacy was of the Faith—that was why the martyrs died for it. Outside the supremacy of the See of Peter no unity existed or could exist. The Catholic Church was one. Unity was the desire of Christ. So it had been understood from the beginning. That the papacy was in disrepute (our martyrs had grown up under the papacy at its worst when Alexander VI reigned), had nothing to do with the case. St. John of Rochester and St. Thomas More died rather than deny the truth of Christian morals and of Catholic faith. Contemporaries as "fools esteemed their life madness and their end without honour. Behold how they are numbered among the children of God and their lot is among the saints."

**Notes and Comments.**—Continued from p. 41.

successful meeting in 1930, in the Kensington Town Hall, to protest against the exclusion of women, unaccompanied by men, from certain restaurants and coffee stalls, after certain hours. The Criterion was one of the chief offenders. As protests were unavailing, the Alliance decided not to patronise this restaurant. The happy ending contained in a letter just received from the Criterion Restaurant speaks for itself: "Since the latter part of 1933 this Establishment has been under new Management . . . Ladies unaccompanied by Gentlemen may dine at this Restaurant at any hour. It is of course understood that as Licensees we reserve ourselves the right to approach anyone, should they be conducting themselves in a manner likely to cause annoyance to other Patrons."

We congratulate the proprietors on this reversal of policy, and are glad to know that the somewhat absurd position previously created exists no longer.

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At the 12th Congress of the International Alliance for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship held in Istanbul, April 18th—25th, under the presidency of Mrs. Corbett Ashby, there were over 300 delegates from 30 different countries. The British delegation sent its full complement of 12 delegates and 12 alternates, seven of which were from St. Joan's Alliance, namely, Mrs. Laughton Mathews, chairman, Miss Barry, Hon. Secretary, Miss Spender, Hon. Editor, Miss Betty Lowe, Mrs. Fox, Mrs. Knight and Miss Barbara Barry. Among other British delegates were Viscountess Astor, M.P.; Mrs. Pethick Lawrence; Miss Picton Turberville, and Miss Reeves.

The work of the Alliance was divided into six Commissions: Suffrage and Equal Political Rights; Equal Moral Standard; Like Conditions of Work; Women under the Law; the Nationality of Married Women; and Peace. Mrs. Laughton Mathews was chairman of the Nationality Commission, and Miss Spender moved the resolution on the position of women in Mandated Territories. The Turkish authorities and the Union of Turkish Women entertained the delegates in many delightful ways, and showed the utmost solicitude for their well-being in Istanbul.

The Congress will be more fully described in our next issue.

**Notes and Comments**

We offer our respectful congratulations and homage to H.M. King George V of England on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of his accession to the throne, and wish His Majesty and H.M. the Queen all happiness. From the point of view of feminists the most important event during the 25 years of His Majesty's reign is the granting of franchise to women—the first instalment in 1918, and equal franchise in 1928.

May the coming years bring a Golden Jubilee to the King, and remove the last vestiges of inequality between men and women.

\* \* \* \*

May 19th will be a day of rejoicing for all English Catholics, for on that day the two great English men, BB. John Fisher and Thomas More, will be raised to the Church's altars. With the rest of our fellow Catholics we offer up thanksgiving that at last our prayers for the canonisation are answered and that England adds two more names to the roll of Saints—the first English names to be added since the "Reformation."

\* \* \* \*

At the enthronement ceremony of His Grace the Archbishop of Westminster in Westminster Cathedral on April 29th, the Alliance was represented by Miss Havers, acting Hon. Secretary, and Miss Eleanor Fitzgerald.

\* \* \* \*

Several amendments to the India Bill regarding women demanded by Miss Rathbone and other members have been rejected. Mr. Lansbury moved that the word "sex" should be incorporated after the word "colour" in the clause dealing with fundamental rights which runs: "No subject of His Majesty domiciled in India shall on ground of religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them be ineligible for office under the Crown in British India, or be prohibited on any such grounds from carrying on any trade, business or profession in British India." We very much regret the rejection of this amendment—an amendment consistently and continually demanded by Indian women. Sir Samuel Hoare proposed instead to add a subsection to certain Service Clauses to make it clear that as far as public offices were concerned no sex discrimination was contemplated. Another amendment rejected was that a woman should be included in the Advisory Council of the Secretary of State.

As we go to press we learn that an amendment proposed by Miss Ward has been accepted which will provide that of the Seats in the Council of State to be allotted to Madras, Bombay, Bengal, United Provinces, Punjab and Bihar, one in each province shall be reserved to women. Election will be through the Provincial Upper House. Miss Ward and Lady Astor insisted it was essential the six women should be chosen by women and not men.

\* \* \* \*

Mrs. Hamid Ali, one of the outstanding leaders in the Indian Woman's Movement, and a delegate from the All-India Women's Conference to the Istanbul Congress, has come to London for a short visit at the invitation of the Liaison Committee of five Women's Organizations, of which St. Joan's Alliance is one. It will be remembered that Mrs. Hamid Ali was one of the three women chosen by the Indian Women's Organisations to give evidence before the Joint Select Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform, and her presence here while the India Bill is still before Parliament will be of great value.

The Liaison Group are giving a reception to Mrs. Hamid Ali at the Y.W.C.A. Central Buildings, Great Russell Street, on Monday, May 27th (4—6 p.m.) when Mrs. Corbett Ashby will take the chair. As many members as possible are asked to attend. Entrance is free and tea 9d.

\* \* \* \*

Our Dinner in honour of the Rt. Hon. J. A. Lyons, Prime Minister of Australia, and of Mrs. Lyons, will be held at the Criterion Restaurant on Thursday, May 30th (7-30 for 7-45). Mrs. Corbett Ashby, recently returned from the Istanbul Congress over which she presided, will also speak.

The Dinner will be a unique event in the history of the Alliance, and readers will not want to miss it. They are urged to come and to bring their friends, both clerical and lay, to do honour to our distinguished guests and co-religionists.

Please write at once to the Office for tickets, price 6s. 6d.

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In connection with the above dinner members will remember that our Alliance organised a very

(Continued on previous page)



## 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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## This Year of Jubilee

If popular opinion may be gauged from the innumerable special Jubilee supplements, numbers, books and articles that are now pouring from the press, everyone seems agreed that—the Great War apart—the two outstanding features of the reign of King George have been the amazing developments in applied science and the transformation in the lives of women.

While welcoming this verdict as in some degree the measure of the success of their efforts, and while rejoicing that some at least of their dreams for women have come to pass, feminists will, I think, join in the forthcoming celebrations with somewhat mixed feelings. Their congratulations and good wishes will, of course, go out to His Majesty on the attainment of the Silver Jubilee of his reign, but, as their minds inevitably travel back to 1910, there will be stirred up in their hearts a host of uneffaceable memories, such as cannot be paralleled among any other section of the community. For, to all who are proud to call themselves feminists, the last twenty-five years have been years of unceasing struggle in the cause of justice and freedom, and of all those years surely the bitterest and grimmest were those at the beginning of the present reign. To those of us who have grown up in the woman's movement and still more to those who have grown old in it these years must always have something of the character of an unforgettable nightmare, in which Holloway prison, forcible feeding, the "Cat and Mouse" Act, the tragic Derby of 1913, Government betrayals, and innumerable other ugly things dog the march of the ever-growing army of women, to which St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, born at that time, contributed the Catholic contingent.

Fortunately, though but rarely acknowledged, all the struggles and sufferings of that heroic period and of earlier years bore fruit in the later part of the reign, and so we have cause, too, for pride and rejoicing as we look back on its history. Accelerated by the Great War, and assisted by the advances in science and medical lore, and by other social factors, the woman's movement has indeed made wonderful strides forward in England since the Kings' accession. There has been a tremendous increase in women's personal liberty and in their opportunities for self-expression, personal advance and service to the community, with a corresponding improvement in their health and a widening of their outlook and interests.

Unfortunately, the principle of the essential equality of men and women, which underlies the whole movement, has not as yet been thoroughly learned by the nation—hence both the danger of losing the ground already won and the difficulty of securing further progress. What Dr. Gore said once of the Labour Movement is true also of ours. Our goal has never been the removal of a few specific shackles on our freedom nor the gaining of certain material benefits for our sex, but the changing of the attitude of the mind of the community to women, and to all the things for which women stand. That goal is still far-off.

Were it otherwise, we should not be obliged to clamour year in and year out for reforms that seem to us vital, but to men of little account. Adequate numbers of women police would long ere now have been patrolling every town in the country, giving women and children that special service in time of trouble that only women can render. The child drudges of Hong Kong would not have had to wait for redress for more than half a century had women that

power and influence which real equality would confer on them. There would not be the crying disgrace of a heavy and preventable mortality from maternity in a country that valued its women folk. The tale could be continued interminably. The moral is that the woman's movement is by no means over, and that the heroic efforts of the earlier years and the glorious achievements of the later should but stimulate us all to continue our labours, so that future generations, in Mr. Baldwin's significant words at the passing of the Equal Franchise bill, "may have a fairer chance and a fairer home than has ever yet been vouchsafed to the generations that have passed."

NANCY STEWART PARNELL.

## ARCHBISHOP RONCALLI AND THE ISTANBUL CATHOLIC DELEGATES

On Holy Saturday Archbishop Roncalli, Apostolic Delegate to Istanbul, gave a private reception to the Catholic delegates to the Istanbul Congress. The delegates numbered 27 women from 11 countries: Austria, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, France, Hungary, Great Britain, Italy, Jugo-Slavia, Lithuania, Poland, Ukraine. They were warmly welcomed by His Grace who after giving them a most interesting account of present conditions in Turkey kindly entertained them to tea. Madame Malaterre Sellier (France) expressed the thanks of the delegation and presented His Grace with their Easter offering.

On Easter Monday the Archbishop said Mass especially for the Catholic delegates at the Franciscan Church of St. Antonio. Mrs. Corbett Ashby, President of the International Alliance for Equal Citizenship, attended the Mass.

The Archbishop gave a short sermon after the Mass in which he described the walk to Emmaus when the disciples first realised that Our Blessed Lord was indeed risen from the dead. "But the women had seen the Lord first of all and had told them he was risen. The disciples would not believe it. This made me think of you and the work you are doing here. If Eve caused the first sin to enter the Garden of Paradise, it was another Woman who presented to the world its Redeemer. St. Paul says: 'Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever modest, whatsoever just, whatsoever holy, whatsoever lovely; whatsoever of good fame, if there be any virtue, if any praise of discipline, think on these things. The things which you

have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, these do ye, and the God of peace shall be with you.' It is a great and lovely work you are doing—a work of charity of redemption—a work for civilisation and internationalism—a work which leads to justice and right understanding. Do not be afraid. Go forward with courage."

## OBITUARY

The prayers of our readers are asked for the repose of the soul of our friend and life-long supporter, the Rev. W. H. Kent, D.D., O.S.C., who died recently. Father Kent was well-known as a scholar and as a linguist of very uncommon ability. He was our ardent supporter from the very first, in the days when suffrage and woman's rights were decidedly unpopular. As he told us in reply to our congratulations on his Sacerdotal Golden Jubilee, in 1931, he was a suffragist before the founders of the Alliance were in their cradles. He once wrote for us in the "Catholic Citizen" and in the "Literary Notes" which for many years he contributed week by week to the *Tablet*; he frequently went out of his way to defend woman's suffrage and the cause of feminism. One of his last public appearances was at the 21st birthday dinner of the Alliance. We shall always remember him with gratitude and affection. At the Requiem, the Alliance was represented by Mrs. Shattock and Miss Barclay Carter.—R.I.P.

\* \* \* \*

The Woman's Movement has lost two of its oldest veterans during the last month, in the deaths of Miss Agnes Garrett and Dame Sarah Lees, D.B.E., LL.D.

Miss Agnes Garrett was sister of the late Dame Millicent Fawcett, and belonged to a family famous for its support of woman suffrage. She died within a few weeks of her 90th birthday.

Dame Sarah Lees died in her 93rd year. In 1903 she was elected to the Oldham Town Council, she was presented with the freedom of the Borough in 1910, was Mayor of the Borough 1910-11, and made an alderman in 1913. She was a Member of the Court of Manchester University.

Both were active workers for woman's suffrage. May their valiant souls rest in peace.



## Qurratu'l 'Ayn

The First Woman Suffragette

By SHIRIN FOZDAR

Reflecting upon the present position of women one can hardly believe that a comparatively few years ago they were considered in the western world as little more than men's playthings and in the east as veritable chattels. Although the change has been brought about and we women of to-day enjoy in many parts of the globe unmolested the privileges which our mothers or grandmothers never dreamt of enjoying, yet how many of us care to investigate at what price this freedom was bought?

In the early nineteenth century women everywhere were regarded as men's inferiors. Education in many nations was forbidden them. Ignorance largely prevailed among them and through it women submitted to the tyrannies of men. Conditions were very much worse in the East than in the West. But it was in the East that the first woman who might have been called a suffragette started the emancipation movement for her sex.

Born in 1817 in Persia in a family of scholars, Qurratu'l'Ayn (Solace of the Eyes) grew into maidenhood. The land of her birth was at that time in a very degenerate condition. Injustice and ignorance prevailed. The women were kept in veils and regarded with contempt. Qurratu'l'Ayn, pioneer in the women's rebellious movement, felt bitter over the prevalent conditions but was momentarily helpless. Yet being born in a family which was well versed in the literature and scriptures of that country she availed herself of the opportunity this afforded and imbibed as much knowledge as was possible from her own father and uncles. By her superior intelligence and her talents thus developed she soon became famous as a poetess and could frequently discomfit the most learned men of her time by her knowledge and exposition of the Koran.

It was in the middle of the nineteenth century that Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Baha'i Movement, arose in Persia. Besides exhorting men to abandon prejudices, Baha'u'llah declared the necessity of Universal Education, a Universal Religion, a Universal Language, Universal Peace, an International Court of Justice and Absolute Equality of the Sexes. He taught that male and female were like the two wings of a bird, which when propelled by the same impulse would cause the bird of humanity to soar heavenward to the summit of progress. These teachings spread like wildfire in Persia and Qurratu'l'Ayn, who had long felt the need

of such a teaching, became one of the earliest believers and an outstanding worker for this faith.

Qurratu'l'Ayn had been married at an early age to her cousin, Mulla Muhammed, who was the son of a Muhammedan priest. She was the mother of two sons and a daughter, and her married life was happy. When she imbibed these new ideas and demanded equality, she took the then drastic step of removing her veil, and travelled from one country to another in the East preaching her belief. All who met her were enamoured by her bewitching compelling eloquence. None could resist her charm; few could escape the contagion of her belief.

Thousands of women were awakened to the realization of their capacity for equality, and thousands of men were found willing to give up their orthodox creeds in the light of the new knowledge she was helping to spread. Twelve hundred people are reported to have volunteered to follow her when the Central Government of Turkey ordered her to leave Turkish territory, where the authorities considered her presence a danger to their orthodox creeds. In a short time the Persian Government also fearing that her activities might be the undoing of the prevailing order of things, ordered her arrest. After keeping her in prison for two years the authorities thought it safer for them to do away with her completely and so one day in August, 1852, she was led away from her prison to meet death by strangulation. She was strangled and buried weighted down with stones in a dry well before life was extinct.

Although Qurratu'l'Ayn was dead, Persian womanhood had awakened. The women of Persia, who till recently had lived in seclusion and ignorance, became brave. Not fearing the cruel death meted out to Qurratu'l'Ayn they remained firm in their belief and spread their message. Thousands were captured and tortured to death. The account of the manner adopted in bringing about their end is soul stirring. Yet these pioneer workers spread the message from one end of the country to the other until men all over the world consciously or unconsciously succumbing to the contagion, were awakened to the dawn of a new day.

The women of the nineteenth century have paved the way for us with their blood. Should we not with courage keep up the standard of equality, or shall we like cowards undo the work they have done?

## Reviews

**Women in the Civilised State.** By John Presland. (Routledge, 5s.)

Under chapter headings, Do Women Displace Men, Woman as Individual, Education and Life, etc., the author examines woman's position in the world to-day. Her conclusions (for John Presland is a woman) are not always those with which a sound feminist would agree—for instance to take the chapter on education many of us would prefer "a severe mental discipline" to be the rule for girls rather than something reserved for "the girl of exceptional mental gifts," since women have a reputation for incapability of sustained mental effort which dies hard and which may be largely due to their lack of intellectual training in the past. Besides why should one even conjecture that: "The number of women who are by nature fitted for citizenship in that great republic of the intellect may be smaller than the number of men . . ." Imagine bringing up a family of boys and girls with this at the back of one's mind! Again, in the Introduction, Restrictive Legislative and the Nationality of Married Women, questions important in themselves by reason of what they signify, are given perfunctory and disputable reference in foot-notes. But within limits this book is a careful study, and well worth the reading. The case for family allowances is put eloquently, as also that for more intelligent training in Houskeeping, i.e., the raising of the status of the domesticities. C. S.

**Quadragesimo Anno.** The Catholic Social Guild Year Book, 1934 (1s. net.)

Our sadly belated notice of this valuable publication can only urge on all and sundry to expend 1s. upon it. Every one is aware that the rather involved and Latinized English into which papal encyclicals are usually translated does not make for clarity. The point of the new C.S.G. translation of *Quadragesimo Anno* is that it has been thoroughly revised, simplified in language, brought nearer to the Latin original and been provided with notes and subject headings and, finally, has been authorised by the Holy See.

**Glen's Law Relating to Unemployment Assistance** (Law and Local Government Publications; 5s. net.).

All who want to know precisely what the Unemployment Assistance Act, 1934, proposed to do will find the text of the Act in this volume with useful notes and introduction, edited by Miss Bright Ashford, who is a special-

ist in these matters. Unfortunately, as we know, this is the Act under which allowances were cut down on so wide a scale as to excite a veritable explosion of wrath in the House of Commons, and what the Board of independent administrators will carry out in future has yet to be decided. V. M.C.

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Readers and members perhaps do not know how short the Office is of voluntary helpers. Within the last year we have lost many valued helpers, full-time and otherwise, by reason of their moving away from London or taking full-time jobs. If our work is to continue the ranks must be filled. This is an S.O.S.—will those who have any spare time apply to the office at once? There is much to be done—routine office work, typing, helping to sell on the market barrow, selling papers and pamphlets, etc. work to suit the varied talents of all. We particularly need a typist who could come regularly once or twice a week. Perhaps those who cannot help personally might feel inspired to ear-mark a subscription for a paid typist. We cannot have our hon. secretary killed by overwork, so please everyone think hard of ways and means to help.



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

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Office—55, Berners St., Oxford St., London. W.1.  
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