

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.

Vol. XIII, No. 9.

15th OCTOBER, 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.

The Liquor Popular Control Bill (1927).

By M. S. DALTON.

By kind permission of the Editor, the following article appears as the case against the Bill, in reply to Miss Whateley's defence of it in the July number of the *Catholic Citizen*.

The Oxford-Liverpool Bill is dead once more. Its death sentence was passed by an overwhelming majority in the House of Lords last July. In its four previous editions it met with the same summary defeat. Why?

The reason is plain. Ethical and political principles, gravely controverted, underlie this Bill, which represents the comprehensive programme of every school of "Temperance Reformers." The honest Prohibitionist, the subtle "Local Option Prohibitionist," and the supporters of State Control have sunk their differences in it. Yet the Bill, drafted to please all, has pleased none.

It has the chameleon's colours. It claims to be democratic, giving a free choice—"Popular Control"—to the people. Its supporters assert that it favours neither "Prohibition," nor "State Purchase," and defend it as "experimental." Its generous "compensation" is loudly extolled.

Both Title and Memorandum are grossly misleading. There is no real "popular control." The Memorandum speaks of giving the people of an area the right to decide periodically whether (a) the present system is to continue, or (b) the industry to be

re-organized, or (c) licences to be abolished.

The true case stands thus. On the first count, the people having once decided to abolish licences, the decision is irrevocable. At any subsequent election they can only vote on whether they will continue "dry," or have "re-organization" under a governmental Board, appointed and rigidly controlled by the Home Secretary. There can be no return to the present system. Still less is any future popular control suggested in the granting or distribution of licences.

There is, therefore, no free choice except at the first poll. Thus the Bill cannot honestly be described as "experimental."

In the first (1921) edition of the Bill, the words used in the section corresponding to the "Re-organization Provisions" of the 1927 Bill are identical; but in 1927 these words, frankly labelled in 1921 as "State Purchase," are re-labelled "Re-organization"; apparently as a smoke-screen.

It has been repeatedly declared that this Bill is "not a Prohibition Bill." But it is essentially a "Local Option" Bill, and it is undeniable that Prohibitionist Reformers regard Local Option as "the stepping stone to Prohibition" (Rev. J. Whitehead Clegg, 1922); "Local Option means Local Veto, and its value is that it is the gradual road to Prohibition" (Mr. Leif Jones, 1925); "Prohibition their ultimate goal. . . . Fight for Local Option all the time, and allow

Prohibition to take care of itself, and they were on safe ground" (Dr. W. A. Chapple, 1921); "Local Option is Prohibition by areas" (Methodist Recorder, 1922), and "The most effective method of arriving at the goal of total Prohibition" (White Ribbon, 1922).

Space does not permit of a detailed examination of the Compensation scheme in the 1927 Bill. Far from being an extension of the Balfour Licensing Act of 1904 (which gave real compensation for levy by increased trade, and a compensation of increasing value for suppressed licence-holders), the results both to licence-holders and to persons whose licences were taken away would be almost the very reverse of the workings of the 1904 Act. Both licence-holders and off-licence holders would have an inordinate levy made on them, and the loser of a licence would receive as compensation a gradually diminishing amount, becoming non-existent at the end of fifteen years. An insurance system under which the longer the insured subscribed, the less he received, until at length he received nothing at all, would hardly be a popular novelty. This is perhaps a sufficient obituary of a Bill so disingenuous as to well deserve its fate. What was its real objective?

The title of the Bill might well have been "The Liquor Trade Abolition Bill." It is evident to friends and foes alike that its true purpose was to kill the Industry, many of its supporters hoping thus gradually to achieve National Prohibition.

The vital questions remain. Had this Bill become law, would Temperance have thereby been promoted? And would the national character have benefited?

The primary concern of the British and essentially of the Catholic citizen in this matter should be the promotion of temperance, *i.e.*, the spirit of moderation in all things, through self-control, and the preservation of individual liberty. The two must move together. The evidence of the United States of America affords irrefutable proof that Prohibition does not abolish drunkenness. Local Option has proved a failure wherever it has been tried. State management has not advanced the cause of temperance in Carlisle. Licensing statistics of 1926 place Carlisle 64th of 85 towns in convictions per 10,000 of the population,

as against 50th in 1925. The Southborough Report, 1927, appreciating public-house improvements in the Carlisle area, yet states that it is "not satisfied that a case has been established for the extension of the scheme to any other particular area or place," and stresses the desirability of an improved type of public-house under the present system, urging that licensing justices should "more readily lend themselves to schemes of improvement and enlargement by the brewers."

We urge that thus to "let well alone" and help it to be better under the present system is the surest way to solve the problem of drunkenness. The country is astonishingly more sober than it has ever been before. Let every opportunity be given of wisely educating public opinion. Let the working man learn to respect his own liberty of personal choice; let man and woman increasingly fulfil their part in mutual respect, and the result, a free and sober nation, will not disappoint the most zealous Temperance reformer. But in the building or re-building of society, it is wise to "make haste slowly."

Equal Franchise.

As we go to Press the good news comes that the Prime Minister has once again promised to give women equal political rights. Speaking at the Unionist Conference at Cardiff, he declared that the Party had made up its mind on the question of women's votes. He reminded his hearers of the change wrought by the Reform Bill of 1918. "That year made this country, with the exception of what we are going to do next year, into a democracy in fact." Mr. Morgan Morgan's resolution calling upon the Government to introduce a Bill giving women the franchise on the same terms as men, and at the age of 21, was carried by an overwhelming majority.

But we must leave nothing to chance. There are still some 200 Conservative M.P.'s., some of whom are definitely opposed to Equal Franchise, while the views of the rest are unknown. We must concentrate on converting waverers and opponents. Country members of the Alliance are asked to write to their M.P.'s. asking them to support an Equal Franchise Bill, and report result to the Hon. Secretary.

Notes and Comments.

While we sympathise with the two honourable men who have been victims of police court convictions, and are glad that they succeeded in getting the convictions quashed at the London Sessions, their suffering will not have been in vain if the public interest aroused leads to an alteration in the law, which permits men and women to be convicted on police evidence only. Feminist societies have long complained of the manner in which women are arrested and convicted on the word of one policeman; thousands of women in the year are hauled before the courts, and it is practically useless for them to contradict the policeman's word. We shall now, perhaps, have the matter properly thrashed out. This is a good opportunity to press forward the agitation for the repeal of the Solicitation Laws, which operate unjustly against women. Let Lady Astor's Public Places (Order) Bill be made law.

It seems that the Home Office has decided to set up an Enquiry. The list of members has not yet been published, but we trust the Home Secretary will include women on the committee.

* * * *

The Flashlight (South Africa) for August congratulates Miss Dorman on her achievement in forming two new leagues for Woman Suffrage. Suffragists in South Africa are hard at work, and the paper shows how well they understand the situation, and we do not believe that any government will feel safe in flouting women much longer. South Africa cannot afford to lag behind the rest of the British Commonwealth in the way it is doing.

* * * *

It is most regrettable that no country saw fit to send women delegates to the Eighth Assembly of the League. The women substitute delegates, who go year after year to the League, have done good work, and we may be sure that men of the same experience would hold the position of delegate, but the League, though new, retains old prejudices, where women are concerned.

The Alliance is giving a Dinner to Dom Gilbert Higgins, C.R.L., one of our staunchest supporters, at the Rendez-Vous Restaurant, 45 Dean Street, on Tuesday, October 18, at 7 p.m. Members are specially asked to attend this Dinner to show their appreciation of all the help we have received from our distinguished associate. Tickets, 5s., may be had from this Office, 55 Berners Street, W. 1.

* * * *

MASS FOR DECEASED MEMBERS.

The annual Mass for deceased members, associates and benefactors of the Alliance will be offered at St. Patrick's Church, Soho Square, on Sunday, November 6, at 10-30, when we hope to have a good attendance of members.

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CHRISTMAS SALE.

The Alliance will have a stall at the Christmas Sale to be held at the Caxton Hall on November 23 and 24. Gifts for the stall or money donations will be most gratefully received at the office.

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EQUAL FRANCHISE MEETINGS.

The Equal Franchise campaign is again in full swing after the holidays. On Sept. 8 Miss Fedden addressed the women's section of the Wandsworth Central Labour Party by request of the Women's Freedom League. Weekly outdoor meetings have been held at Hampstead Heath since Sept. 11, and our thanks are due to all our speakers, especially to Miss Fedden, Miss K. Fitzgerald and Miss Whately, and to Miss Chave Collison of the British Commonwealth League.

The Alliance also organized a meeting in Hyde Park on October 8, in connection with the Equal Political Rights Campaign.

The Young Suffragists are organizing a petition to the Prime Minister urging him to make their Bill the *first* to be placed on the Statute Book next session.

We appeal to all our members who are willing to obtain signatures of women under 30, to write to Miss Barry for a petition form without delay.

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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Catholicism and Feminism.

Since our last number further reports have reached us of the Semaine Sociale held at Nancy, during which feminism was discussed under all its aspects. The importance of this gathering must be our excuse, if excuse is needed, for referring again to the subject. *L'Union Nationale des Femmes* gives an account, and *Le Petit Democrate* gives full reports of the various conferences, which are deeply interesting. This being the first occasion that the Catholics of France have come together to discuss the problems of feminism, the speakers seem to have shown themselves better feminists than, perhaps, one would have expected. When, speaking more or less officially, and laying down Catholic principles, great caution is necessary, and some Catholics too often, with undue anxiety, are apt to confound principles with prejudice. The speakers at Nancy seem to have escaped the pitfall, and this in spite of the fact that, with two exceptions, the problems of feminism had been entrusted to men. We hope should this interesting experiment be repeated, by any set of Catholics, that we shall hear women speakers expounding the nature of woman, the feelings of woman, the capacity of woman. Men, however learned, wise and broad-minded, must necessarily suffer from preconceived notions of woman, and some of the speakers at Nancy cannot be exonerated from this failing.

For ourselves we part company with our

French colleagues on the subject of protective legislation for women in industry. Give us protection for all workers, and women will judge for themselves what work is best suited to them. Nor do we see eye to eye with Fr. Gillet on the question of the leadership of men, his opinion being an instance of those preconceived notions of which we have complained.

But the Conferences of Nancy will, we feel sure, bear good fruit. We particularly appreciate the appeal made by Mgr. Beaupin, for Catholic women to take part in international work. We have never ceased to plead the urgency of their doing so.

We were glad to see that Great Britain was represented by our member, Miss E. Lambert, who spoke in her country's name at the lunch and dinner.

The importance of the gathering was recognised by the Holy Father, who sent a letter to the conference in which he speaks of the new position of woman (we quote from the *Acción Católica de la Mujer*), and of the vast field opening out to her in intellectual culture, social work, and citizenship, in which it lies with her to use her influence to promote respect for family life, the Christian education of youth, and the safeguarding of public morals.

We believe women will take their duties seriously, and that the race will benefit by the new power given to them.

L. DE ALBERTI.

International Notes.

We rejoice to learn from *La Française* that on August 14 the law regarding the nationality of married women was at last passed by the Senate. Henceforth, a French woman who marries a foreigner remains a Frenchwoman, unless she wishes it otherwise, the sole exception to this ruling being that if she marry a foreigner, and live with him out of France, she may have to change her nationality in order to conform to the laws of her country of residence. On the other hand, the foreign woman who marries a Frenchman only becomes a Frenchwoman at her own request, or in accordance with the laws of her own country. A child born in France of a French mother married to a foreigner is French, provided the mother has remained French. The law also provides for those Frenchwomen who were married to foreigners before it was passed. They can recover their own nationality by a declaration before a Justice of the Peace on condition that, with their husbands' authority, they live for at least two years in French territory.

We learn from *The Tablet* that married women may be members of the new Spanish Assembly on condition "that their husbands give consent, and that the said husbands do not themselves belong to the Assembly."

Madame Ceza Nabaroui contributes to *L'Egyptienne* (Cairo) a study of the so-called Egyptian Scholastic Missions, which for a century have been coming to Europe at the expense of the government of Egypt. The movement for higher education, of which they are an outcome, began to affect women only when the loss was realised which accrued to the nation, because women in childhood would not be attended by men doctors. The first step in the right direction was taken when certain women—most of them, at the outset, Abyssinians and negroes—were scientifically trained as midwives. The first girls' school was founded under the Khedive Ismail, and was succeeded by several government primary schools for girls. Finally, when the Egyptian constitution was promulgated, the principle of equality of instruction for boys and girls was established. Two years ago a girls' secondary school, giving the same teaching as the boys' secondary schools, was

opened; and this year twelve girls were among the candidates for the Kafaâ examination, and their success was, in proportion to their numbers, greater than that of the boy candidates, one of them passing first. Very shortly, this girls' secondary school will send students who have matriculated to the Egyptian University. Meanwhile, the government has already sent missions of girl students to Europe who have specialised in several branches of science and arts, including, three years ago, six young women sent to the London School of Medicine, whose despatch from Egypt signalled "the supreme victory over the old prejudice in favour of woman's inferiority."

* * * *

Our contention regarding the urgency of the age of marriage resolution, to be moved by St. Joan's at the National Woman's Conference, is much strengthened by the fact that there is an agitation in favour of raising the marriage age in a British Dominion, India. *Sri Dharma* (Madras) reports that the All Indian Woman's Conference on Educational Reform recently passed a resolution deeply deploring "the effect of early marriage on education, and urging the government of India to pass legislation making marriage under sixteen years of age a penal offence." The Conference ranged itself wholeheartedly in support of Sir Hari Singh Gour's Bill, which raises the age of marriage. According to a *Times* report, a private Bill was discussed in the Indian Assembly on the 15th of September, which would render invalid, subject to conscience clauses, the marriage of Hindu girls below twelve and boys below fifteen. Mr. Crerar, Home member, laid stress on the danger of hasty legislation of this kind, which might not be effective and might offend religious prejudices, and moved as an amendment that the Bill might be circulated in order that public opinion might express itself on it. This amendment was rejected by five votes. A section of the unofficial members, who supported the Bill but doubted the wisdom of passing it without detailed consideration, then moved its reference to a Select Committee, and this was accepted by acclamation.

"The Assembly," says the *Times* correspondent, "has thus approved the principle of the legislative prevention of infant marriage. A noteworthy incident in the debate was the speech of Mr. M. K. Acharya

(Madras), Orthodox Brahmin, who formerly strenuously opposed the Bill for raising the age for marriage. He now said his wife favoured the present Bill, and therefore he would support its reference to Committee."

* * * *

Meanwhile the native states are giving India a lead. *Stri Dharma* announces that the Kotah State in Ajmere district has passed a Marriage Act, to have effect from July 1927, which forbids the marriage of girls under twelve and boys under sixteen, of girls under eighteen to men of more than double their age and of any girls to men over forty-five years old, the two latter enactments being obviously designed to save women from early widowhood. The same Act forbids girls to be sold to matrimony. Almost simultaneously, the *Daily News* reports that Maharajah Sir Hari Gour Singh has sanctioned for his own state of Kashmir a law which forbids the marriage of girls under fourteen and boys under eighteen years of age.

* * * *

The Dawn (Perth, Australia) reports the second Triennial Conference of the Australian Woman's Equal Citizenship Federation, now the Australian Federation of Women Voters, which was held in Sydney during May. Resolutions were passed in favour of "woman's claim to a real equality of liberties, status and opportunities" with men, their inclusion, by the Federal and State governments, on all National or State commissions, delegations or boards; their access, on the same terms as men, to all positions in the Commonwealth and State civil service; the payment of men and women for work on the basis not of their sex, but of their "physical and intellectual suitability" to their work, and the elimination of differentiation between the sexes in dealing with public morals. Finally, the Conference recommended its constituent societies in each State to take action to secure the return of suitable candidates to the Federal and State parliaments.

* * * *

La Lutte de la Femme (Athens) communicates a report of the Fourth Conference of the Women's Little Entente, held in Prague in June, to which all the Little Entente nations sent numerous delegations. Three sets of resolutions were passed, namely, on the means of assuring peace between the nations, on international econo-

mic relations, and on feminism. Under the last head, it was resolved that women should enjoy equality of political rights with men. As regards their property, their right to the management of their own property was affirmed, the institution of the dowry was condemned, and it was asserted that the partner to every marriage who acted as housekeeper had a right to half the other partner's earnings. Dealing further with marriage, the Conference resolved that no person should contract a legal marriage without presenting a health certificate, that a moral or physical taint in either partner to marriage transferred all rights of guardianship over the children of this marriage to the other partner, that civil marriage ought to be introduced into countries in which it does not yet exist, and ought alone to make a marriage valid, that divorce should be obtainable by men and women on the same terms, that women should have the same rights as men over their children, that a widow should be the guardian of her children, and that a woman who marries a foreigner should be able, if she choose, to retain her own nationality. It was also resolved that illegitimate children should be on a complete equality with legitimate children, their parents having the same obligations to them.

In the matter of working conditions, the Conference resolved that women should have the same access as men to industrial and civil employment, and should be promoted and paid on the same terms, these rights to belong equally to married and single women. Women's right to work was to be restricted in no way otherwise than that of men. Legislation for the protection of maternity should be so framed as not to handicap women economically. The existing prohibitions and restrictions limiting the work of expectant mothers should be superseded by the establishment of economic conditions which would allow childbirth in the best possible conditions. The right to combine and to go on strike should be assured to women.

Finally, the Conference resolved that there should be one moral law for men and women, that traffic in women and children should be a penal offence, severely punished, and that all laws dealing in a special way with the vice and morals of women, should be repealed.

H. D. I.

Children of Mary Meeting.

We are indebted to Dom Gilbert Higgins, C.R.L., for his kindness in inviting us to send a speaker to address the eighth Annual Meeting of the Children of Mary held on October 4 at Caxton Hall, the Most Reverend Alban Goodier, Archbishop of Hierapolis presiding. The meeting was ably organized by Miss Chapman, the Hon. Secretary, the hall being crowded with enthusiastic young Catholic women wearing their sodality ribbons and medals.

Dom Gilbert Higgins, in giving his report, urged the sale of the C.O.M. Magazine; Canon Monk spoke eloquently on Lourdes pilgrimages. The Bishop of Pella gave a spirited address on the importance of women in political life, and incidentally advised women to join the Dames of St. Joan, the women's counterpart of the Knights of St. Columba, so that they would be ready effectively to support the Church at a critical moment. Miss M. Fedden, in an inspiring address, voiced the claims of St. Joan's Alliance, and begged Catholic women to join in the last lap of the campaign for Equal Franchise, the keystone of the arch of justice. The Rev. Father Hanifin spoke devotionally.

Our paper sellers were busy, as usual, at the door outside, and did a brisk trade.

The Spanish Assembly.

The *Times* reports that there are in the Spanish National Assembly three women members among the State Officials, and 13 among those chosen to represent national interests.

Jumble Sale.

A Jumble Sale (in aid of *Catholic Citizen* funds) will be held at 342 Fulham Road, S.W. 10, on Saturday, November 5, 1927, at 2 p.m.

Members are asked to make this a great success by helping in the following ways:

1. Jumbles of all kinds—men's, women's and children's wear, household articles, etc.—may be sent to the Hall to arrive on Friday, November 4, or Saturday morning, or, if necessary, will be called for. Parcels

should be addressed: "C.C. Jumble Sale," 342 Fulham Road, S.W. 10.

2. Loan of a motor car to fetch parcels on Saturday morning, November 5.

3. People who will distribute handbills in the vicinity of the hall any day during the week previous to the Sale.

4. People who will help price and arrange the goods at the Hall on the morning of November 5.

5. People who will help sell at the Jumble Sale. We want lots of helpers.

All communications with reference to the Jumble Sale (but not parcels) should be addressed to Mrs. Laughton Mathews, 21 Fawcett Street, S.W. 10.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH.

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

The first meeting of the Branch since the summer holidays was held on September 26 at 78 Bedford Street, by kind invitation of Mrs. Gordon, when members had the pleasure of hearing Mrs. Crawford on "Family Endowment." Her address aroused great interest in the subject, and several members expressed their eagerness to hear more.

Extremely bad weather has prevented the Branch from holding any open-air meetings on Equal Franchise, and has also spoilt the open-air campaign of the Peacemakers' Pilgrimage Committee in which, as an affiliated society, we were asked to co-operate.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS.

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Butler-Bowdon, Miss E.	3 0 0
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	£9	6	6

TREASURER'S NOTE.

Since last month I have received one promise of 25s. per quarter for one year towards the Office rent, and two promises of half that amount. I make an urgent appeal for two more guarantors of 25s. quarterly, or any smaller sum. Only £10 more is needed to secure the rent for a year, and thus leave our minds free to concentrate on the big Equal Franchise Campaign ahead. Our Christmas Sale will be held on November 23 and 24. Gifts of all kinds will be welcome, and the earlier they are sent the better.

G. JEFFERY.

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

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OBJECT.

To band together Catholics of both sexes, in order to secure the political, social and economic equality between men and women, and to further the work and usefulness of Catholic women as citizens.

MEMBERSHIP.

All Catholic women are eligible as Members, who approve the object and methods, and will pay a minimum annual subscription of 1s. Men are invited to join as Associates, on the same conditions, with the exception that they may not elect or be elected to the Executive.

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**COUNCIL FOR THE REPRESENTATION OF
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ANNUAL MEETING

at

Women's Service House, 35 Marsham Street, Westminster,
Thursday, November 3rd, 1927.

Business Session 3-30 p.m., followed by a Meeting on the work of the Eighth Assembly of the League of Nations, 5 p.m. Chairman: Mrs. Ogilvie Gordon, J.P., D.Sc. Speaker: Dame Edith Lytton (British Substitute Delegate to the Eighth Assembly). Admission Free. Collection. Both Meetings open to the Public. Tea may be ordered after the meeting.

Hon. Sec.: Miss L de ALBERTI,
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The Monthly Organ of

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FOR SUFFRAGE AND EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

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