

THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN

Organ of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, 55, Berners St., London, W.1.

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April 15th, 1920.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

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.

ARE WE AFRAID OF DEMOCRACY?

BY MARY WALL.

There is an old story of a man who set out before dawn on a long journey, and who saw, coming towards him from the misty distance, a monster of terrifying aspect. As he came nearer and as the mists cleared, the traveller saw that this monster was a man. When he came nearer still and the sun had risen and his own vision served him still more truly, he perceived that the man was—his own brother!

There is a lesson here for those amongst us who are disposed to be afraid of Demos—this monster of our own earlier day, so long cramped, chained, hidden and disfigured by the mists of prejudice, ignorance and harsh usage—now surely coming into its own—as *men*. If recent events have not shown us that these men are our brothers, then indeed the world-war will have been fought in vain.

I find amongst my working men friends far, far more who mourn sincerely for gallant boys shot down in their strength and beauty than I do amongst my middle-class and rich friends; that is to say, *quite as many* in proportion to the numbers of "the patient people."

Moreover, to come to mere money sacrifices, I find no parallel in any class to the action of those North Country miners, who, having, week by week, put what they could spare into the first War Loan, met week by week and burned the scrip in an urn, "in memory of the Fallen." Here was patriotism indeed.

An humbler instance of the true patriotism of Demos is that of the old man who, in the third year of the war applied for his Old Age Pension. He was worn and feeble and evidently very ill. It was pointed out to him that his papers showed him to be seventy-two

years old and that he had had the right to the pension two years earlier. "I knew that," he said, "but I thought, as the country was at such a great expense I would try to work on a little longer."

Well-to-do Catholic women—or so it appears to me—are more disposed to be afraid of Democracy—that is to say that they are more disposed to be reactionary—than are the women of any other religion, even including those of the eastern cults who are fairly numerous in London to-day. But perhaps in so thinking, my mind is working on the same lines as that of the man who feared that, as a result of the war, there would be more widows marrying single men than there would be single men marrying widows. A condemnatory aphorism about statistics does not clear the brain in matters of this kind.

Perhaps all good women are inclined to be reactionary. Perhaps good women, being naturally constant, are constant even to the bad old system by which Demos was only something to be exploited—a machine and not a man. Yet—our religion teaches us something different?

We Catholics do not require the platitudes of the New Thought, nor of the New Theology, nor of those "isms" for strengthening that "mentality" which is getting so much attention nowadays, in many cases to the lowering of spirituality, one fears—we do not require these to teach us to examine our fears. All that these "systems" can teach us is to be found, in fewer, sweeter, simpler words, wrapped up in the teaching of our Lord and the good advice of His saints. "Prove all things" says St. Paul.

Let us examine this bogey of Democracy.

The late Father Tom Burke once said that when his mother took him into the back kitchen and made him kneel down beside her and repeat after her that Collect beginning "Direct, O Lord our actions by Thy holy inspirations and carry them on by Thy gracious assistance," he knew that he was going to receive as good a thrashing as he had ever had in his life.

The same prayerful spirit, perhaps with "Come Holy Ghost. . . kindle in us the fire of Thy divine Love" as its expression, may be helpful to us here and now.

An American has laid it down that "democracy does not mean 'I am as good as you are'; it means 'you are as good as I am.'"

As Christians we can all subscribe to this. As reasonable women also. If we wish to carry the thought further, we may acknowledge that among our friends who do the world's manual labour, we number many whom we freely recognise are far better and even cleverer than ourselves. Just as we recognise many better and cleverer than we are among those who toil not nor spin—but who are beginning to attempt to labour—by means of talk intended to infect others with their own fear of democracy.

If only they would see that it is too late!

I remember well the first outdoor Suffrage meeting I attended; it was held in Trafalgar Square about eleven years ago.

A popular Labour man—he was about fifty years old at that time—began his speech with these words:

"Nobody will ever convince me that women are not intellectually fit to take their share in the nation's housekeeping. I am the eldest of seven children and my father died before I was twelve years old. From that day until, one by one, we began to earn, my mother worked for us all and fed and clothed and schooled us—there was no free schooling in those days; she never asked a penny-piece from the parish, but she pulled us all through somehow."

We would all be willing to own that that good mother was far better and cleverer than most of us are?

Democracy is made up of many such unknown heroines; and of good fathers also. Yet we continue to fear it—in the lump.

While we are about it, we may as well

recognise that we do not belittle democracy when we talk about the failings or the impertinences of domestics nor of the incivilities of the nerve-ridden bus conductors. For we all agree that some of these are uncivil, and some are not. For myself, I have seen very rich men, with whom my work as a commercial journalist brings me in constant touch—they are nerve-ridden to a man trying to hold on to what they have so hardly won—I have seen these so uncivil to each other that "the fur flew"—literally; that is to say that the domestic animals on the rugs of their palatial Board-rooms hurried away—as far and as fast as they could, from the sounds of their fury. I heard a charlady of a philosophical tone of mind say one; "Why don't they control themselves? If they'd five children in one room, as I have, they'd have to!" The window-cleaner to whom she spoke said "They're all right when they're quiet." Which I thought was very kind.

A fine saying of Burke's comes to mind here:

"There is a working class—strong and happy—among the rich and the poor. And there is an idle class—weak, wicked and miserable—among the rich and the poor. And the worst of the misunderstandings arising between the two orders arise from the fact that the wise in one class habitually contemplate the foolish in the other."

Let us not fall into the same error. Let us remember the wise and patient domestics and the jolly bus conductors we know and "cry quits."

Of democracy in the lump I cannot be accused of seeking a too favourable example if I refer to its terrible excesses during the French Revolution. It is historic knowledge to-day that, during the worst days of that unhappy period *not a single pennyworth of damage was done to private property by the mob*, even when it was drunk with blood. So did democracy declare that its quarrel was with bad government.

In the Chartist risings that followed the long Napoleonic wars, and out of which arose, slowly and painfully it is true, the modern development of democracy as a corporate entity, this fact was constantly impressed upon the insurgents by their leaders. And we have the same idea acted upon in our own

(Continued on page 33.)

NOTES AND COMMENTS. INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

When the Representation of the People Bill was being considered in Committee Viscount Wolmer moved an amendment to keep the voting age of women at 30. This gave the reactionaries an opportunity of distinguishing themselves. We hope that the women constituents whom Colonel Archer-Shee is supposed to represent will note that he considers that: "To make a fuss about votes for women is a lot of sentimental slop and slobber." Lady Astor said she was astonished at the reactionary speeches, she considered the reactionary a greater danger than the direct actionary, she was neither. The amendment was defeated by 21 votes to 13. The Committee adjourned till after Easter.

The French society L'Action sociale de la Femme is holding a congress in Paris on the 23rd—25th of April, to discuss the Catholic feminist programme. We have been asked to send a representative, and our chairman, Miss Kathleen Fitzgerald, B.A., has consented to represent the C.W.S.S. and will speak on "Woman Suffrage."

We are glad to see that the University of Liverpool has conferred the honorary degree of M.A. upon our valued friend and associate, Father T. J. Walshe.

All feminists will be pleased to see the name of Miss Eleanor Rathbone among the twenty-four woman magistrates appointed for the County of Lancashire.

We are promised within the next few weeks a new weekly paper to be staffed entirely by women and with a Board of women directors, the chairman being Mrs. Chalmers Watson, and the vice-chairman Lady Rhondda. The new paper will be called *Time and Tide*, and it will be edited by our member, Miss V. S. Loughton, M.B.E.

We congratulate Miss Isabel Collier on passing her medical examination M.B. and Ch.B. with honours, and we wish her every success in her career. Miss Collier is a member of the Committee of our Liverpool Branch, and has done valuable work for the Society.

From the 6th to the 12th of June is the date fixed for the Eighth Congress of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, to be held in Geneva. One of the features of the Congress will be a Mass Meeting addressed exclusively by Women M.P.'s from various countries. One of the speakers will be Fru Elna Munch, a member of the Danish Rigsdag, who recently made a brilliant speech in favour of a Bill giving equality to women in the Danish Civil Service, a measure subsequently passed into Law by the Rigsdag.

By an official decree published in the Diario Oficial of the Uruguayan Government the President, Baltasar Brum, has appointed Dr. Paulina Luisi as Official Government Representative of the Uruguayan Republic to the Eighth Congress of the I.W.S.A.

Dr. Paulina Luisi is the well known leader of the Woman Suffrage Movement in Uruguay, and has also just carried out an extensive campaign throughout Uruguay and the Argentine for the abolition of the White Slave Traffic.

We have received a number of interesting reconstruction pamphlets and literature from the National Catholic War Council, U.S.A., dealing with such subjects as Citizenship, Girls' Welfare, Land Colonization, Unemployment, &c., which give a good insight into the great work done, and being done by the Catholics of the United States. In the Social Service Program for Catholic Agencies we note with pleasure the following sound counsel:—"With the coming of woman suffrage, Catholic women's organizations are under moral obligation to become acquainted with the duties of Citizenship."

The Spanish press continues to occupy itself with feminism, and recent numbers of the Gaceta Financiera, and Figaro of Madrid contained interviews with the distinguished suffragist Sra. Doña Maria Espinosa, giving an account of how quickly the movement progresses in Spain.

L.A.

THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.

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

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WOMEN AND THE LEAGUE.

At the mass meeting of women held at the Albert Hall some weeks ago, Lord Robert Cecil uttered words which the majority of his audience, one hopes, will have taken as a solemn warning. Reminding women that it was the anniversary of their enfranchisement: "You are no longer voiceless and voteless," he said, "you have become full citizens of the Empire with an influence as great as that of your male fellow-citizens. But do not forget that this change has thrown upon you a great responsibility. You can no longer stand aside even if you wish to. Surely the cause of peace must appeal to women even more than men 'Be up and doing.' The starving children of to-day, the unborn children of future ages call for your help. Take care lest future generations may say that in the first great call to the enfranchised women they failed to do their duty."

It has been frequently said that the League upon which so much depends, will be a League in name only if it is a League of Government and not a league of peoples. Judging from that vast and enthusiastic gathering at the Albert Hall, and from other signs, women will not be laggards in backing the League. They have the same reasons as men for desiring its success, and they have others which men have not. The League will provide a means of suppressing the traffic in women, such as has not existed before; it can be made an effective means of protecting women against exploitation; if women are active in the League again it may become an effective means of procuring the abolition of State regulation of vice—not only in the British Empire, but throughout the world, and of the recognition of an equal moral

standard. These are not selfish aims; the horrors and sores of the old world will certainly be retained in the new if women stand aside.

It was due to the new status and to the insistence of women that the principle of the equality of the sexes was acknowledged in the Treaty which ended the greatest war this world has ever known. Clause VII of the League of Nations Covenant lays down that "all positions under or in connection with the League, including the Secretariat, shall be open equally to men and women." Not even the most sanguine among us would have dared to hope that the high contracting parties would have endorsed the principle for which we have fought for so many weary years. The principle is indeed established, but if it is to be more than an academic aspiration we have still much work before us. Up to the present moment Norway is the only Government which has appointed a woman as one of its representatives to the League of Nations Parliament. Why did not England lead the way?

Women's organisations have recognised the importance of making Clause VII effective, and already a "Council for the Representation of Women in the League of Nations" is in being, which will co-operate with women in other lands, and prepare lists of suitable women for appointments in connection with the League. For if it is important that women should be appointed it is still more important that they should be the right women. Suffragists who have worked so long in a world wide movement, and who have come to look upon the welfare of women in all countries as part of their common cause, cannot but feel

at home in the atmosphere of the League. Catholic women have a higher reason still for thinking internationally, for do not they already belong to a universal church, which, in itself, but for human perversity, would be a true League of Nations.

L. DE ALBERTI.

Correspondence.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH.

March 22nd, 1920.

DEAR MADAM,—Will you kindly permit me to reply to Mrs. Crawford's criticism of my article in the CATHOLIC CITIZEN?

In her criticism of my article Mrs. Crawford disputes the contention that the policy of the Ministry of Health is based on the principle of Heredity rather than Environment. I may point out that this is not a personal opinion on my part, it is expressed in definite terms in the official memorandum of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, Sir George Newman, namely, in the "Outline of the Practice of Preventive Medicine," recently published by H.M. Stationery Office. On p. 46 Sir George Newman states "that the first part in a national policy of Preventive Medicine to be borne in mind by central and local authorities is the question of Heredity and Race." On p. 50 he says "what is needed is nurture and education and the study and practice of the Science of Eugenics." On p. 99 he states that the principal element in ordered sequence is "Eugenics and the principles of Sound Breeding." No further proof is needed that the main policy of the Ministry of Health as enunciated by its Chief Medical Officer is to secure State Control of the Reproduction of the Race.

I disagree profoundly with Mrs. Crawford that the effect of Schools for Mothers and the whole paraphernalia of State officialism is to counteract the effects of poverty. The financial burden of all these measures ultimately falls upon the working-classes, the value of whose wages is reduced by an increase in the cost of living for each new piece of bureaucratic paternalism imposed upon them. Again, it is illogical to treat disease without reference to its cause.

Mrs. Crawford asks if it is not a mistake to say that Eugenics necessarily connotes something anti-Catholic in spirit if not in fact? Well, it is not a mistake to tell the truth, and the truth is well known that the Eugenics' Society is definitely advancing a propaganda which has for its aim the artificial restriction of the Race. Hence a collision is bound to occur between the Eugenic party and the Catholics, who hold unnatural methods of birth-control to be sinful. The modern practice is to gloss over these things under cover of altruistic sentiments as to Hygiene and Racial Welfare. The danger of the Ministry of Health is all the more insidious since its purpose is masked behind a camouflage of official verbiage. The whole thing is abhorrent that mankind should be delivered body and soul to a slavery degrading him to the level of the beast. Eugenics cannot enlighten the public conscience, as Mrs. Crawford supposes, for it is not of the light, but of the darkness. That it should be cast out from our midst as a foul blot on Christian civilization should be the earnest prayer and hope of all those who have at heart the cause of Liberty, Justice and Morality.

AGNES MOTT.

THE UNMARRIED MOTHER.

DEAR MADAM,—I hope you will spare space for my protest against the remarks of Councillor V. M. Crawford, relating to the name of the father of an illegitimate child being given. In her very able article Councillor Crawford shows very plainly that she is not in favour of the mother of an illegitimate child being compelled to furnish its father's name. I can see no adequate reason why this should not be insisted upon, and I think if a girl knew that she would be obliged to give such information before receiving aid she would think more deeply about the subject than she does to-day. I have done much work amongst unmarried mothers, and I have had heartfelt sympathy with many, but I have come across others where the man deserved the most sympathy. From the days of "The Scarlet Letter" we seem to have come to the extreme other side, and I think it is high time that girls and women fully understood that to have a baby who will bear its mother's shame all its life is not going to make her a person to be lauded and fussed over when there are so many honourable mothers who have little notice taken of their need because they happen to wear a wedding ring.

Yours sincerely,

(MRS.) AMY L. DUNNETT.

5, Eversley Street,
Liverpool, March 25th

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As our readers were informed earlier in the year, this month we have been obliged to renew the lease of the office at an increased rent of £10, so that increased subscriptions are more urgently needed than ever. The sum of 2/6 will pay the rent for one day, and I shall be most grateful to receive this or any larger sum from all those who have not yet sent me a subscription.

GABRIELLE JEFFERY.

REGULATED PROSTITUTION WITHIN THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

Mrs. Dixon's article in your last issue should stir the hearts, not to say the consciences of all Catholics, men and women. We wish to give it the sympathy of our pen by supplementing it with a few words on how it strikes a Catholic theologian.

The "regulation of prostitution" belongs to the extremely difficult ethics of "co-operation with sin." The columns of the *Catholic Citizen* would not be sufficient nor suitable for discussing this matter of co-operation as it should be discussed.

But it is clearly seen how great a difference there is between "co-operating with sin" (which is itself a sin) and "co-operating with a sinner" (which may be charity and even justice). Unless this difference is seen and acted on endless difficulties arise. Thus as in the abstract heresy is worse than harlotry, heretics would be denied housing, clothing, food, by good folk fearing to co-operate with heresy.

Another difference, difficult to apply if not to see, is between "regulating sin" (which may itself be worse than the sin) and regulating the accompaniments of sin (which may be a civic duty). Thus Mrs. X—, of St. John's Wood, who is too successful a harlot to dwell in a brothel, may have a luxurious house, which as a house must be "regulated," and inspected by the Municipal Council. From time to time the Borough Engineer, or Electrician, or Sanitary Inspector may see that Mrs. X—s, house fulfils all the regulations of his department, but it would be absurd to say that this was regulating prostitution or co-operating with the harlot Mrs. X— in her harlotry.

Again, ethical frontiers are neither mathematical straight lines nor even mathematical curves but moral adjustments which must themselves be adjusted to the human will. For this reason it may be found that, even as in the medical sphere one man's meat is another man's poison, so in the moral sphere, a course of action aimed at regulating the accompaniments of sin may result in fostering sin. Thus quarantine and segregatory methods which the chaste and healthy community uses to protect itself against venereal disease may be found to cause venereal excess.

But the state of things which our Military System has introduced into India has passed beyond the mere regulation of some of

the consequents of sin. Our military authorities are guilty of nothing short of "co-operation with sin" in a state of things where in every cantonment there are tolerated houses of vice reserved for our troops—that into these *chakla* (brothels) girls are sold, kidnapped, decoyed—that their *Government House* as it is called is under the protection of the Cantonments Magistrate, a Military officer—that this Military Magistrate registers the government harlots (for we can call them nothing else) and appoints an Indian woman or man to superintend them—and that outside the brothel a British Military policeman mounts guard! *Yet some nice people think we are in India to spread sweetness and light! The figure of a soldier mounting solitary guard in distant land has often been a noble symbol of Freedom. But the figure of a soldier mounting guard outside a Government brothel is disgusting.

The Military System of *Government Houses* is much more easily seen to be against the moral code than is the Civil System of Segregated Areas. If a city wishes to protect itself against venereal contagion, it is not unnatural that it should seek to segregate the carriers of the disease. On merely abstract grounds a reasonable argument may be found for segregating into definite areas the class by whom venereal germs are spread. But whatever may be said in the abstract for this policy of segregation the concrete empiric argument against it seem irrefutable. The main argument for segregation is that in self-defence a community can isolate and thereby weaken its enemies. But the concrete fact of experience seems to be that segregation instead of weakening venereal danger, increases it. As the chief source of this disease is not heredity nor environment, but sin, any policy that tends to make the sin more common will tend to make the disease more prevalent. But for many physical and psychological reasons which we have not space even to summarise the quasi-official sanction given by segregation tends to increase the sin. No wonder, then, that medical experts have again and again denounced segregation for having increased the very evils which it sought to end.

VINCENT McNABB, O.P.

* Owing to the representation of Mrs. Dixon and her husband the Government Houses in India are temporarily closed.

Continued from page 28.

time when the militant suffragists destroyed only property belonging to the State and to cabinet ministers!

This brings us to the consideration of democracy as a form of government—our rich friends are perhaps more afraid of this than of Demos. As yet they hardly realise that it is no longer possible to act with regard to Demos on the bad old principle of "Divide and Reign," as it was in the bad old times which are gone forever.

Democracy as a system means "government of the people, by the people, for the people"—the quotation is somewhat hackneyed.

We hardly expect to find Sir Robert Peel, the man who gave cheap bread to the people, voicing a fear of democracy. Yet—"In every village there will arise a miscreant to celebrate the most grinding tyranny by calling himself the people"—he says. Then we remember how many English statesmen have been opportunists who have given the very measures they had distrusted and opposed only in answer to an unmistakable demand from Demos when he had ceased to be patient.

An example on the other side is that of Macaulay. He spoke against the demands of the Chartists—almost all of which have now been granted—after having declared:

"That is the best government which desires to make the people happy and knows how to make them happy. Neither the inclination nor the knowledge will suffice alone; and it is difficult to find them together. *Pure democracy—and pure democracy alone* satisfies the former condition of this great problem."

That is to say—and Lord Macaulay weighed his words as we know—that democracy alone *wishes* the happiness of the people. May we not hope that, in its present higher state of development, democracy also *knows* how to make people happy?

Macaulay allowed himself to be afraid of democracy when he went back on that declaration.

Coleridge's exposition of democracy—though it went far for his time—will scarcely do to-day! "Democracy," he says, "is the healthy life blood that circulates through the veins and arteries which support the system but which ought never to appear externally and as the blood itself." Our democratic "seers" of to-day—and what a grand list

their names make—Galsworthy, Belloc, Chesterton and others—would not assent to this?

I think it was Lowell who said that Christ was the first true democrat who ever breathed, as the old poet Dekker said he was the first true gentleman.

I heard a Dominican preacher say, in the pulpit of the Kingsway church in this last Advent of 1919, that we are not told in Holy Scripture that our Blessed Lord ever wrote anything brilliant nor that he shone as a statesman. . . we are told, he said, that he laboured as a carpenter—that the Son of God and our own Elder Brother was a working man.

I think we might fear Demos less if we remembered this.

And we may remind ourselves again that democracy is made up of men and women who suffered and were bereaved in the war in the same awful measure as every other section of society; that it was their sons, fighting in the trenches whom England promised by the mouth of her statesmen—should return "to a country fit for heroes to live in."

When Demos—the People—is mentioned, let us lose sight of the monster in the misty distance—or rather let us move nearer until we see the man—our very brother; see

"that our blood—

Of colour, weight and heat, mixed all together—

Would quite confound distinction."

Nor need we fear harm nor injury to that oligarchy, which is so pathetically anxious to squeal before it is hurt, if we, as Catholic women, also remember "that most beautiful truth in morals—that we have no such a thing as a distinct or a divided interest from our race. In their (the people's) welfare is ours, and by choosing the broadest path to achieve their happiness, we choose the shortest and the surest to our own."

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Hon. Sec., Miss A. J. Musson, Fair View West, Rainhill.

Meetings will be held at 6, Lord Street, at 7.30, during the summer. They will take the form of socials. A paper being read at each meeting as follows:—
April 27th. Miss T. M. Browne, M.A., on "Catholic Adult Education."

June 1st. Miss L. M. Blackledge, on "Careers."

July 1st. Miss D. M. Hughes, B.A., on "Ways—Broad and Narrow."

There will also be music, followed by light refreshments at a small charge of 6d.

THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.

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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.

METHODS.

1. Strictly non-party
2. Active propaganda by political and educational means.

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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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in the

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144, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C. 1.

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Wednesday, April 28th. Speaker: **Mrs. Nevinson.** Subject: "The Bastardy Bill 1920." 3 p.m.

May 5th. Speakers: **Miss Helen Ward, Mrs. Abbott.** Subject: "The International Woman Suffrage Congress at Geneva." 3 p.m.

ADMISSION FREE.

Tea can be obtained in the Cafe at close of afternoon meetings at 7d. each.

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