

# THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN

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

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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.

## THE THIRD DRAFT OF THE "FISHER EDUCATION BILL."

BY A CATHOLIC TEACHER.

"We must now educate our masters"—the truth of this oft-quoted contemporary comment on the 1832 Reform Bill has at last been seen, and the present Education Bill is its result. But how slowly and inadequately English opinion, both State and private, has moved in the direction of educational reform, can only be realised fully by those who know well the educational history of other countries.

At last, however, the whole system of English education is to be reconstructed. Every child, however poor, who is capable of benefiting, is to have free of cost and under the best conditions, the opportunity of a thorough education; and no longer is this to be left to the discretion or the parsimony of a Local Education Authority, too often composed of men whose primary object is keep down the rates, and whose educational knowledge is nil.

The outstanding features of this Bill are two. First of all, it provides for "the progressive development and comprehensive organisation of education." For the first time in our history a comprehensive system of education is made possible for the children of the working-man; for the first time in our history the problem of a true and democratic education has been tackled.

The second main feature of the Bill has, curiously enough, been overlooked by many people. By it every Education Authority, County or Borough, is *compelled* to make such provision as has been stated above. The importance of this simply cannot be over-estimated. Hitherto each County or Borough has, within wide limits, acted as it felt inclined; its educational policy has been niggardly or progressive, at the pleasure of its

Education Committee—Birmingham, for example, has been far more public-spirited than the majority of the big towns. Henceforth, in the words of the Bill, it "shall be the duty" of every County or Borough, to make full educational provision, and the Directors and Secretaries of Education will have a much freer hand and can—nay must—really direct and control the education of their district.

What is the attitude of the British working-man towards this far-reaching change in our educational system? There is undoubtedly a strong desire that his children shall have the best possible education. The British public at present have a wholesome respect for this, and are certainly not of Pope's opinion that "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing," while many see clearly that it is better if possible to "drink deep." The working-man realises and vaguely fears some of the economic difficulties consequent upon parts of the Education Bill—for example, Continuation Schools and abolition of Part-Time—but is most keen on his children having a "better chance than he had."

But in any case, the State has simply been forced at last to make itself responsible for education—and this, because education, though socially desirable, is not a thing that people are very willing to pay for. Even the Public Schools, the schools of the rich, cannot always pay their way, and have to appeal to the charitable public for aid in the form of endowments. If every one received no more education than he or his parents were willing to pay for in an unsubsidised market, few would learn more than the three R's.

Education is a service which will not be forthcoming in the quantity and quality that are socially desirable, if society relies on the

system of free enterprise regulated by competition.

The main provisions of the Bill are fairly well-known—the establishment where desirable of nursery schools for children up to the age of five or six; this to be followed by a good general education up to the age of eleven or twelve, non-provided schools to be grouped “where necessary for educational efficiency and economy”; the establishment of Central schools on the line of the London ones for giving children above the age of eleven higher elementary education and thus avoiding the great waste now common in the last two years of an elementary school child’s life; the abolition of “part-time” education, and instead, the provision of Continuation Schools for young people up to the age of eighteen; greater facilities for physical training.

That there is a certain amount of Catholic opposition to isolated parts of the Bill is also well-known, but it is earnestly to be hoped that Catholics as a body will not feel it necessary to oppose it. For example, were the Bishops’ Resolution of February last against compulsory continuation education to prevail, the result would be nothing short of disastrous on the standing of the Catholic body.

The Government on its part seems anxious to meet the reasonable wishes of the Catholics. Mr. Fisher has in this third draft of the Bill made several concessions, a brief summary of which will now be given, though the matter is a highly technical one, and of little interest to general readers.

The most notable concession is the introduction of a new clause, No. 29, which acts as a saving for non-provided schools. This still gives Catholics the right to open new elementary schools, a right apparently jeopardised by the original draft of the Bill.

Again, Nursery Schools can be non-provided and aided by the Local Education Authority, though the Authority has still the power under certain conditions to make a Bye-law fixing six as the age for attendance in its area.

Clause 28, dealing with the Managers of Central Schools, in this third Bill at least gives the right to approve of the Managers—a right denied to them in the last draft.

Clause 30 of the former Bill, depriving the Local Education Authority and the Mana-

gers of the right of appeal to the Courts against any decision of the Board of Education, has been omitted.

Clause 8, section 3, has been modified, and the withdrawal of children from their own school is limited to instruction in practical work only.

Catholic objections are now chiefly focussed against the compulsory attendance of all Catholic girls and boys between 14 and 18 years of age at Continuation Schools, provided, controlled and directed by the Local Education Authority, in which there is no provision for religion being taught or practised, and the teachers in which will be appointed by the Local Education Authority.

However, the Bishops have been very reticent about any definite scheme or proposal of their own for Catholic Continuation Schools, but wherever the numbers of Catholic children are sufficiently large they refuse to give up the claim. Herein, it seems to me, is shown the weakness of our position. A principle, if a principle, should be adhered to by all concerned; if once sacrificed, the whole position is untenable. But Catholic Continuation Schools all over the country are simply not a matter of practical politics. If the idea were carried far, it would soon become on the one hand impossibly extravagant and unjust to the community as a whole, on the other entirely futile; a certain minimum number is required to form a sufficiently effective Continuation School.

Certainly there remains the responsibility of providing religious instruction in these years of continued education, but this is a responsibility felt and met at Oxford and Cambridge for older persons, and as pointed out in these columns not long since by Prior McNabb, for younger children in Paris. Could not the situation be met by the Prior’s suggested extension of the system of Catechists? Is not this essentially a sphere of work for educated Catholic women? And would not the religious instruction of these Continuation School pupils afford an excellent opportunity for a revised and more modern course of work—Apologetics, for example, and the type of subject given at the Catholic Evidence lectures? The possibilities are tempting. Let us Catholics not strive against the stream of this great Education Bill; rather let us see how we can use it for our purposes.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS.

It is said that the number of women voters will far exceed the six million at first estimated. The time for sending in claims has been extended, the last day is July 25th.

\* \* \*

As the public begin to realise the nature of Regulation 40D, the opposition to it increases. The Freedom League have been holding a number of meetings of protest up and down the country. Over 200 resolutions demanding the withdrawal of 40D, have been forwarded to the Home Secretary. On June 13th representatives of the fifty-six organisations which are supporting the Association of Moral and Social Hygiene were received at the House of Commons by Mr. Lees Smith and other members of Parliament, and discussed the matter with them. We were represented by Miss Kathleen Fitzgerald, B.A. Pressure is being brought to induce the Secretary of State to receive a deputation. The following resolution was carried unanimously by the meeting:—

“That this meeting, representing fifty-six social, religious, political, and industrial organisations of men and women, with a membership of well over a million members, has heard with profound regret that the Secretary of State for War refuses to receive a deputation from these organisations in order that their views on Regulation 40 D of the Defence of the Realm Act may be submitted to him. This meeting respectfully requests the Secretary of State for War to reconsider his decision, in view of the extreme indignation which is being aroused throughout the country by Regulation 40 D.”

“That this meeting pledges itself to offer uncompromising opposition to Regulation 40 D of the Defence of the Realm Act as being unequal between the sexes, unjust in its operation, and ineffective for the purpose of reducing venereal disease in his Majesty’s Forces.”

Since then the question has been again raised in the House of Commons by Mr. Lees Smith, backed by Mr. Chancellor and other members. Mr. Macpherson, in his defence, cut a very sorry figure.

The *Common Cause* of June 14th contained a most interesting article by Dr. Margherita Ancona on the position of women in Italy, and the hope that, as a result of the war, the vote will be conferred on them. As the *Common Cause* points out, there is an extraordinary parallel between events in Italy and in England. A Bill was introduced by Signor Salandra to give votes to boys under twenty-one in the fighting forces. Suffragists seized the opportunity to press the claims of women. The Prime Minister, Signor Orlando, who had been a notorious anti-Suffragist, declared his conversion, and the debate seems to have resulted in proving that the Franchise cannot be touched without facing Woman Suffrage. A Bill is before Parliament for the abolition of that medieval relic, Marital Authorisation, and to extend the rights of guardianship, and to open public offices to women. Italian Suffragists feel sure that when the Bill passes into law it will remove the legal obstacles to the political equality of the sexes. We may hope that if Italy leads the way the other Latin countries will not lag behind.

\* \* \*

A Bill to amend the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act of 1914 is before the House of Commons, but it contains no clause to remove the injustice which our present law inflicts on married women. If losing her nationality on marriage with a foreigner was a serious matter for a woman before the war, the last four years have shown how cruel such a position may be. It is an insult to ask a British woman to register herself as an alien (unless she has chosen to become one), but this is what is constantly happening. The Home Office has refused to receive an important deputation organised by the National Union of Women Workers, which had the support of twenty-eight societies of women. It is to be hoped that the new voters will lose no time in agitating for the removal of this grievance.

\* \* \*

Our next issue will contain an analysis of the Maternity and Child Welfare Bill.

## THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.

Office: 55, BERNERS STREET, LONDON, W., I.

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

## IMPERIAL CONFERENCE OF WOMEN.

## British Dominions Women's Suffrage Union.

The third biennial conference of women from all parts of the Empire took place in London on June 4th, 5th and 6th. The British Dominions Women's Suffrage Union, undaunted by the difficulties of these times, has twice during the course of the war summoned delegates from women's societies in all parts of the Empire to confer with women of the Mother Country upon the social and moral questions which, always complex and difficult, have become immeasurably more so from the abnormal conditions now obtaining.

Mrs. Fawcett opened the conference with an eloquent speech on the recent Suffrage victory and the long struggle which preceded it.

A resolution was passed dealing with equal eligibility of women with men for all offices and employments.

Miss Sheepshanks read a paper reviewing the position of women in Europe and America, and the various legal and administrative offices filled by them.

The chief business of the morning session was a discussion on the Endowment of Motherhood, and Equal Pay for Equal Work. Miss Courtney and Miss Royden were the speakers.

The subject for the afternoon was Equal Parental Rights of parents of children born in wedlock, and equal responsibilities of both parents of illegitimate children.

Fru Anker was able to give the Conference interesting details of the recent Norwegian Laws improving the legal position of the illegitimate child, and giving it a proper claim on both parents. This law, said Fru Anker, was founded on the teaching of Christ, that the sin was the same for men and women, and the moral standard the same.

The second day was devoted to the discussion of moral problems, and was opened by Miss Alison Neilans, who read a paper dealing with recent legislation on Venereal Disease in the Self-Governing Dominions.

This was followed by addresses from Dr. Jane Walker and Dr. E. Beadon Turner, President of the British Medical Association, the subject being whether the demand for an equal moral standard from men and women is a reasonable one. Both speakers agreed that the demand was quite reasonable. Dr. Turner said he would speak plainly as a man of the world and as a doctor, and declared that it was absolutely and entirely reasonable to expect the same standard from both sexes. Law could do nothing, but the matter was in the hands of women all the world over. Mothers should tear down the veil of prudery and reverently, cleanly, and decently teach their sons to reverence themselves and the other sex. Women should refuse to introduce into their homes men of evil lives.

The Conference passed a resolution con-

## LONDON AND BRANCH NOTES.

The Office, 55, Berners Street, W.1., will close on July 20th for the summer vacation.

Holy Mass will be offered at St. Patrick's, Soho, at 10-30 on Sunday, August 4th, for the intentions of the Society.

Miss Kathleen FitzGerald, B.A., represents the Society on the Committee of the Women Citizen Association for Marylebone, and Miss Whately on the Committee for Kensington District.

The C.W.S.S. supported the National Federation of Women Teachers at Queen's Hall, at their meeting to demand equal pay for equal work.

Our members, Miss Willis and Miss Camilla, Sevenoaks, have received the "Médaille de la reine Elisabeth."

We are glad to see from the *Daily Express* that our member, Miss Annie Christitch, has reached Zurich from Serbia, where she has been a prisoner for two and a half years under the Austrian yoke.

We are informed that Mrs. Christitch has also escaped to Switzerland.

HASTINGS AND ST. LEONARD'S BRANCH.—Hon. Sec., Miss Willis, Mount Lodge, The Mount, St. Leonard's-on-Sea. A branch of the Women Citizen's Association has lately been formed here, and, at a Conference held on June 14th, a Council was nominated, to consist of 25 members, representing the various organisations of women in the district. Two members of our C.W.S.S. branch were nominated for this Council and were both elected—Mrs. Harrison, our Hon. Treasurer, and Miss Willis, our Hon. Sec. A good deal of interest has been aroused over the Conference and there seems a hope that the Council may do valuable work amongst women before the General Election comes on. Our Hon. Sec., Miss Willis, has received a letter from the Belgian Minister in London, informing her that the King of the Belgians has been pleased to bestow on her the "Médaille de la reine Elisabeth," in recognition of her assistance to Belgian refugees. This gracious act is much appreciated by the members of the Belgian Relief Committee, on all of whom it has been equally bestowed.

(Continued on page 57).

denning the practice of distributing prophylactics to men going on leave as lowering the moral standard, and an unwarrantable insult to the majority of the men.

Divorce was the subject discussed in the afternoon. Mrs. Seaton Tiedeman, of the Divorce Law Reform Union, put the case for divorce, and Mrs. Ronald Bayne and Mrs. Knight-Bruce, of the Mothers' Union, explained the position of those who, like ourselves, oppose divorce on religious and social grounds. No resolution was put to the Conference, but an opportunity of hearing both sides was given to the delegates.

On the third day Miss Mercy Ashworth read a paper on "Women and the Administration of the Law," and pleaded for the admission of women to the legal profession.

Miss Damer Dawson described the work and experiences of the Women's Police Service.

Miss Norah March, dealing with the sex education of the young, reported that public opinion was ten times as strong in favour of sex education of the young than it was in 1916, when the Conference last met.

Mrs. Pethick Lawrence spoke very eloquently of Love as a great constructive force. Children should be taught, trained and disciplined till body and mind became obedient to the will.

Lord Henry Bentinck spoke on the duty of British Citizens in the Motherland and Self-Governing Dominions to their Fellow-Citizens in the Crown Colonies and Dependencies.

The nationality of married women, and International Government were also discussed.

The Conference closed with an evening devoted to India, her ancient traditions and political aspirations.

To those who look for the solidarity and co-operation of women of all the nations these biennial Conferences are of supreme importance. They may haply prove a stepping-stone to Imperial and International Conferences, which as a matter of course will be composed of both men and women delegates, who together may contribute to the building of a new civilization, happier, purer and more wholesome than that which is passing away.

L. DE ALBERTI.

### THE HEALTH OF THE GIRL WORKER.\*

It is a far cry from the factory conditions in the early years of the last century, when Nassau Senior and his friends were opposing the Factory Act because they considered that the regulation of the hours of labour would do away with the employer's profit (on the grounds that it was only in the last hour that the factory was worked that the profit was made) to the conditions existing in the modern, well organised, factory of the good employer, with Welfare Worker, Rest Rooms, and a nine hour's day. The intelligent factory owner or manager is learning that it is to his advantage, as well as to theirs, that his employees should not be overworked, or employed under unsuitable conditions, and Women Factory Inspectors are doing their utmost to bring the ordinary employer into line with the good employers.

But further knowledge is necessary as a foundation for action, and especially is it desirable that more should be known about the effect of industrial employment upon the growing girl. "As adolescents need a sufficient reserve of energy to maintain growth as well as health, it is obvious that conditions of work that exert no injurious effect on adults may be unduly fatiguing for juvenile workers with their twofold need." How far does such work undertaken between the ages of 14—18 injure the health of the future woman, and how best can precautions be taken to prevent these evil effects? Of course such an enquiry to be of a really satisfactory nature, should be undertaken by government with its unique facilities for obtaining information and for comparison and examination. But even a private investigation, such as that, the results of which Miss Collier has given us in her book, "The Girl in Industry," has a very considerable value.

Unable, because of the character of the work, to give exact statistical information, she has yet compiled a book which is both useful and interesting in the extreme. In normal times, the majority of women between the ages of 14 and 18, are, as evidenced by the last census, employed for gain, and it was estimated in July, 1917, that the increase,

\* *The Girl in Industry*, D. J. Collier (G. Bell and Sons, 9d. net).

since the beginning of the war, of the number of women employed in industry was 23.7 per cent. Forced by the scope of the work to confine herself to certain industries, Miss Collier has chosen to investigate the various trades carried on around Birmingham and Coventry, and the cotton, worsted, and clothing trades of Lancashire.

Since the war, the provisions of the Factory Act relating to hours of labour have been completely suspended, and Miss Collier shows that while industrial work in itself seems to have a positively beneficial effect upon the health of the growing girl such work carried on for an excessive period has very detrimental results. Her investigation, carried out as it was in the winter of 1916-1917, was undertaken before the present food shortage had made its most acute effects felt. Many of the witnesses considered that the fact that ill results from the protracted work were not of more frequent occurrence, was due to the reason that many girls were being well fed for the first time in their lives. Girls who had previously been paid only 8/- or 10/- per week, now earned double wages, and spent part at least, of their extra earnings on providing themselves with decent food. It is scarcely necessary perhaps to point this out as an answer to the foolish stories current about the munition workers extravagance, etc. Most people realised long ago that these women were mostly only being able to obtain for the first time in their lives, what the better-off woman would but regard as a necessity of existence.

It is a disadvantage of many books written at this time, that the process of printing, etc., is so lengthy that by the time they are published totally new factors have made their appearance, and, in the case of the book under review, the food shortage is such a factor. So many of the witnesses have laid stress upon the beneficial effects of nourishing food, that one would like very much to know what has been the result upon the girl's health of the food restrictions, and perhaps still more, what was the result of the greater shortage which existed before the food restrictions were put into force?

But in spite of this drawback, the book has a very great value, the effect of long spells of

work, of protracted standing, of the carrying of heavy weights, and many other similar conditions are inquired into and their effects pointed out. Many of the defects seem only to require organisation and thought to obtain their removal, Miss Collier pays many a tribute to the work which Women Factory Inspectors and Welfare Workers have done in this respect. And, therefore, though, as the author herself points out, the book is but a preparation for, and a forerunner of the work yet to be done by a similar, but much wider, investigation which should be carried out under the aegis of a government department, it has a very considerable value, and gives a very fair statement of the harmful conditions affecting the lives of growing girls in industrial employment. As such it has a most useful part to play, and may be especially commended to those seeking by legislation to improve factory conditions.

A.M.C.

### REVIEWS.

#### Catholic Social Guild Publications.

The "Quarterly Bulletin" of the Catholic Social Guild (July) contains an article over the familiar initials, V.M.C., on a "Woman's Right to a Living Wage," the passage in the Guild's "Year Book" dealing with women in industry having occasioned a considerable amount of adverse criticism. V.M.C. states that Catholic sociologists do not appear to have held that a woman is in strict justice entitled to a family wage, but that the difficulty is a real one and must be faced. But what we should like our Catholic students and writers to realise is that this system of paying a man a higher wage than a woman because he is the normal breadwinner has been tried and has disastrously failed. It has resulted not only in the sweating of women, and the undercutting by them of the male worker, but it has been used quite deliberately against the breadwinner. Thus, in a recent official enquiry, it was demonstrated that the Government was paying girl typists less than a living wage, because it was assumed they were living at home. The parents were thus subsidising Government ill-paid labour. The only safeguard, both for the man and woman worker, is the demand—equal pay for equal work.

Among the C.S.G.'s recent publications is "The Worker's Right to Live" (1d.), by Father Bernard Vaughan, S.J. Father Vaughan knows and sympathises with the workers, both men and women. He belongs to a Church which (as he makes clear) has ever championed the poor and the worker. He commends to the Nation the medieval watchword: "Not the wealth of the few, but the welfare of all."

Another pamphlet is the "Restoration of the Law of Nations," by F. F. Urquhart (1d.), which is of particular interest at the present moment. The pamphlet, "Replies to the Pope's Appeal" (1d.), should also be widely read.

The Guild has also issued two new leaflets, "A Protestant's Appeal to the Pope" and "Letter to a Catholic Soldier" (No. 2.) by Father Plater, S.J.

Y.W.C.A.

We have received for review a very useful pamphlet by Dr. Beatrice Webb, entitled "On Keeping Well," issued by the Young Women's Christian Association. It is full of excellent advice for girls of all classes and occupations, telling them the simple precautions to take to avoid ailments which interfere with the efficiency and impair the health of the working girl. The pamphlet may be had for 4d. from the Y.W.C.A., 26, George Street, Hanover Square.

#### JUMBLE SALE FOR CATHOLIC CITIZEN FUND.

We have not received enough articles for our Jumble Sale, and we once more urge members to send a contribution as soon as possible. Parcels should be addressed to Miss Whately (Room 22), 55, Berners Street, London, W.1.

WIMBLEDON.—A local section of the new Women Citizens' Association is being formed in Wimbledon, and the C.W.S.S. have sent representatives to all the preliminary meetings. Lady Laughton will be our delegate, having a place on the Committee, and Miss Fennell is to be one of the speakers at a public meeting to be held in the Queen's Hall, Wimbledon, on July 10th next.

## Why I should Vote?

By D. M. HUGHES, B.A.

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Organ—"The Catholic Citizen," Id. 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.

#### METHODS.

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

#### 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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