

# THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN

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

VOL. V., No. 4.

April 15th, 1919.

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 MINISTRY OF HEALTH.

BY AGNES MOTT.

Public Health is the most important question demanding the attention of the State at the present time. Catholic citizens would therefore do well to concentrate their minds upon it. It is absolutely imperative in the public interests that the whole problem of the unsatisfactory physical conditions of the masses should be approached from a broad point of view and not from a sectional standpoint. Therefore to judge the merits or demerits of the Ministry of Health Bill (February, 1919) it is essential to see what are the evils it proposes to eradicate and how it intends to deal with them. Mr. Lloyd George in his Election address alluded to the impossibility of creating an A1 Nation from a C3 population and for this reason advocated a reconstruction in the health services. All that was required he said was a simple little Bill to give power to a Minister of Health (appointed by the Crown) "to take all such steps as may be desirable to secure the effective carrying out and co-ordination of measures conducive to the health of the people, including measures for the prevention and cure of diseases, the treatment of physical and mental defects, the collection and preparation of information and statistics relating thereto and the training of health persons engaged in health services" (of Clause 2 Ministry of Health Bill) That is all—it sounds delightfully easy—doesn't it?

Now let us see what is really wrong with the health of the people before assenting to this little plan. It is no use blinking facts—we are faced with a National Debt not of £ s d but of human lives whose health and happi-

ness is damaged and destroyed by physical suffering. Sir George Newman reported in 1916 that one and a half-million elementary school children were so physically, mentally defective and diseased as to be unable to derive reasonable benefit from the education which the State provides. One quarter of the Army recruits during the War were rejected as medically unfit for service. One twentieth of the babies born every year die from preventable causes before completing their first birthday. Tuberculosis is responsible for one tenth of the mortality rate whilst other respiratory diseases account for more than a quarter of the total number of deaths. The sickness rates amongst women are shown to be enormously greater than amongst men, nearly all the Women's Insurance societies being insolvent through the heavy claims of their members. About 80 per cent of London children are estimated to be suffering from rickets. This is a correct though incomplete record of the physical deterioration prevailing amongst the people of this country. Various reasons are assigned for this state of affairs—some say it is due to the ignorance of mothers in rearing their children, others attribute it to the employment of married women in industry, whilst a still larger number hold bad housing to be responsible. Now all these factors are contributory causes of disease, but the important thing to remember is that they are only effects of the primary cause of the unsatisfactory condition of this country, I allude to the most monstrous and glaring evil of modern times—that octopus of Mammon—*Industrialism*. Industrialism is a Krupp's syndicate manufacturing munitions of war to



attack the human race—it slaughters millions of lives yearly to suit its whims. It is because Industrialism causes people to herd together in the congested and overcrowded areas of towns in a contaminated atmosphere that disease is so rife and it is this *unnatural environment* which is chiefly responsible for the ill-health of the working-classes at the present time.

Very well then—we have found the enemy Industrialism—Industrialism *must* go. But will the Minister of Health give the Capitalists their *congé*? I think not. Industrialism is too tightly harnessed to the chariot of the State for any likelihood of that happening. Will the measures “conducive to the health of the people” include restoring the land to the native possessors of the soil? Will they include the prevention of rackrenting and the clearance of slum areas? Will they punish profiteering in the people’s food? Will they protect small owners versus trusts? Will they give fair compensation to the discharged soldiers and their dependents? No—the Ministry of Health does not propose to do any of these things. What it does do is to set up a vast medical bureaucracy for the purpose of inspecting the proletariat.

This brings us to the next clause in the Bill (Clause 3) which states that there shall be transferred to the Minister of Health the powers and duties of the Local Government Board, of the Insurance Commissioners, of the Board of Education re medical inspection, of the Privy Council re midwives, and of the Secretary of State re Infant Life Protection. In addition the powers and duties of the Minister of Pensions re disabled soldiers, of the Secretary of State re Lunacy and Mental Deficiency and of any other Government Department referring to health matters may be made transferable at a later date by Order in Council. To put it briefly the purpose of this clause is to inaugurate State Socialism in the sphere of Public Health and to unite all health agencies into one central administrative body. The claim has been made that such a fusion is necessary in order to prevent overlapping and rivalry between the various departments. This argument, however, will

not stand examination, because experience of Central Departments during the War has shown us that Whitehall methods are calculated to produce inefficiency and corruption. The truth is that what is needed to make the health services efficient is *not* their unification in a bureaucratic Ministry but the very opposite, i.e., local government through democratically elected representatives.

In the Ministry of Health Bill there are no safeguards whatever that the democracy will have a voice in the policy of the Public Health. The tendency seems to be to legislate by Order in Council—a most bureaucratic and tyrannical method of procedure. Any interference by the State with the health of the individual is bound more or less to infringe upon personal liberty. It is this aspect which needs to be carefully watched by all vigilant suffragists. In Clause 4 Dr. Addison attempted to meet this objection by the establishment of consultative Councils of which there are to be four, consisting of 20 members of either sex and representing the following interests: (a) Local Government, (b) Medical Profession, (c) Insurance Commissioners, (d) General Public. There has been a lot of controversy about the last group—Lady Rhondda has worked hard for the purpose of securing that this Council should consist entirely of women but so far she has failed to carry her point. The important thing to note is that the reports of these Councils to the Minister are not to be published. They are to remain secret lest the members should be subjected to public odium. This does not look as if the general public will really and truly be taken into the confidence of the Minister. I will not detail the other clauses of the Bill which are of minor importance.

To conclude—the purpose of the Ministry of Health is alleged to be the securing of the health of the people. I have tried to show that unless the whole problem of Industrialism be vigorously tackled the physical welfare of the people must necessarily suffer. The Ministry of Health Bill is totally inadequate to deal with this evil. What is aimed

(Continued on page 31).

## NOTES AND COMMENTS.

We shall watch with deep interest the progress of the Bill for the full emancipation of women, which passed its second reading in the House of Commons without a dissentient voice. This Bill, drafted by the Executive of the Labour Party, besides giving women the same voting rights as men, provides that no woman shall be debarred by sex or marriage from holding any civil or judicial office or place of profit or trust under His Majesty. On the eve of the General Election Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Bonar Law issued a manifesto to British women assuring them that it would be the duty of the Coalition to remove all existing inequalities of law as between men and women. That was a direct appeal for the confidence of the women electors, and though there was no mention in the King’s speech of a Bill to give effect to this promise, nevertheless we look to the Government to fulfill it by giving support to the Labour Party’s Bill or by bringing in one of their own.

The Bill gives eligibility to sit in the House of Lords.

The women societies are taking joint action in support of the Bill, and a deputation of representatives of the constituent societies of the Consultative Committee (including the C.W.S.S.) was favourably received by Mr. Shortt, who expressed his entire sympathy with the Bill. A resolution in favour of it has been sent by the C.W.S.S. to all Catholic M.Ps.

\* \* \* \*

Delegates from women’s societies were recently heard before the Peace Commission on international labour legislation. The delegates represented English, French, American, Italian and Belgian women. The British delegate, Mrs. Corbett Ashby, brought forward the protection of maternity. Madame Marie Verone, a French barrister, asked that the women’s demands should be included in the treaty of peace itself, and not only in the statutes of the League of Nations.

That women should be heard before the various Commissioners set up by the Peace Conference is all to the good, but it is more important by far that women should be appointed to the permanent Commissions,

which will no doubt be established when the League of Nations takes shape. It is said that they will be eligible for all appointments. We must see to it that they are appointed.

\* \* \* \*

We read with pleasure in a recent number of the “Tablet” the remarks of “W.H.K.” with reference to St. Thomas Aquinas, showing that the Belgian Senator, who appealed to this great Doctor of the Church in advocating the political rights of women and universal suffrage, was justified in so doing. Above all we noted with particular pleasure that St. Thomas would provide an effective answer to the obnoxious article on “Woman” in the “Catholic Encyclopedia,” against which we have more than once protested. “W.H.K.” alludes to the writer of the article as “a curious theologian,” and so, in these enlightened days, it is to be hoped he really is.

\* \* \* \*

We trust that the Nurses’ Registration Bill introduced in the House of Commons on March 28th will pass successfully through all its stages. The nurses have worked with great devotion for this measure. In introducing the Bill, Captain Barrett said that the reform was long overdue; the principle had been already accepted by both Houses of Parliament,—by the Lords in 1908 and the Commons in 1914. State Registration exists in South Africa, Canada, Australia, the United States, Germany and Belgium. Well deserved praise has been showered on the nursing profession during the war, but what has been done to improve the conditions of the profession? Nurses in this country are notoriously underpaid, and notoriously overworked, and the result is that there is now a shortage. The Ministry of Reconstruction has a sub-committee considering the subject. When it issues its report, perhaps something will be done.

\* \* \* \*

We call the attention of our members and friends to the meeting of the C.W.S.S. to be held at the Minerva Café, on Tuesday, April 15th, at 7-30 p.m., when Miss Cicely Leadley Brown, M.B.E., will speak on “Pensions for widows of civilians.”



## THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.

Office: 55, BERNERS STREET, LONDON, W., 1.

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## THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN.

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Hon. Treasurer . . . . . MISS BRADY.  
Signed articles do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Society.

### WOMEN LAWYERS.

The wonderful vitality of the women's movement has never before been so clearly demonstrated as during these last four years. It was the boast of the anti-suffragist of former days, days which already seem pre-historic, that a war would be the test which would end for ever feminist aspirations. The fear was frankly admitted on suffrage platforms that a war—no prophet of ill-omen then anticipated a war of such magnitude—would divert public attention from the suffrage movement and delay victory. And then the war came, and not only has the woman's movement withstood the shock, but it has swept on from victory to victory with a rapidity which has startled even those whose faith was the strongest. One by one old barriers are broken down, opponents are turned into supporters, and so we have the strange picture of the Lord Chancellor, our old enemy, Sir F. E. Smith, blessing in the Government's name Lord Buckmaster's Bill admitting women to the legal profession. "The Government," he told the Peers, "welcomes these proposals, and if your Lordships give a second reading to the Bill, and it passes through its remaining stages, the Government hope to be able to give it such assistance in another place as will render it probable that it will soon pass into law."

The Bill provides that a woman shall not be disqualified by sex from being admitted

(1) As a student to any of the Inns of Court and for qualifying as a barrister-at-law, and

being called to the Bar and practising as a barrister-at-law.

(2) As a solicitor or for acting or practising as a solicitor under the Solicitors' Act, 1843, and the Acts amending the same.

In the case of barristers, unlike that of solicitors, no statute stands in the way, the admission of women to the Bar being dependent upon the decision of the Inns of Court.

The Lord Chancellor admitted that the Inns of Court are "not avid for the change," but he guaranteed that they would loyally co-operate in giving effect to the wishes of Parliament if the latter decides that this great and memorable change is to take place."

We may hope therefore that England will come into line with more progressive countries, and we shall presently have women lawyers. In this as in some other ways the Dominions are ahead of us. In Canada, New Zealand and Australia women practice law, and in the latter two women hold positions of Judge associates.

France has many women barristers, one of the most distinguished being Madame Maria Verone, who recently appeared before the Peace Commission on international labour Legislation, and aswed that women's demands should be included in the treaty of Peace itself, and not only in the Statutes of the League of Nations.

There are woman lawyers in Norway, Denmark, Finland, Russia, some of the Swiss cantons and Sweden. In Sweden, we learn

from the International Suffrage News, only unmarried women may practice, married women may not, because of marital authority. The same medieval reason is given in Italy for the refusal to allow women to practise, though they are allowed to study and to take degrees.

America in this matter is ahead of the rest of the world; it is said there are more than 20,000 women attorneys in the United States; and there are several women judges.

Why the struggle has lasted so long in England it is difficult to say, but it is nearing the end. Instead of foolish jokes and stubborn opposition the Benchers, though not enamoured of the innovation, are taking heart of grace and preparing the way for the coming of Portia.

L. DE ALBERTI.

### CATHOLIC SOCIAL GUILD.

The tenth issue of the Catholic Social Year Book gives an account of the Catholic Social Guild and its work since its foundation in 1908. The Guild has done a great work, and is a real force in social questions, and its pamphlets and books on the complex problems of the day are well known to Catholics and non-Catholics. The C.S.G. supplements and does not supplant other Catholic Societies. At the last annual meeting of the Guild it was realised that the time had come to endeavour to organize on a national scale, and for this purpose a Fifty Thousand Shilling Fund is being raised. Labourers are also needed, for the times are critical, and the fields are white to harvest. The year book may be had from the offices of the C.S.G., 1, Victoria Street, S.W.1, price 1/- net.

### A WIFE'S INCOME TAX.

Many M.P.'s are petitioning the Government to introduce legislation to remove the "penalty tax on marriage," by which the incomes of husband and wife are jointly assessed for the purposes of taxation, which the Government has recently declared to be an intolerable anomaly. The women societies have long felt this practice to be a grievance, and have asked the Government to receive a deputation. The request has been

granted. The deputation will consist of representatives from all the constituent societies of the Consultative Committee (including the C.W.S.S.) and many others. The C.W.S.S. has sent a resolution on the matter to the Catholic M.P.'s.

The deputation will also ask that more women be appointed to the Royal Commission on Taxation. So far only one woman has been appointed—Dr. Lilian Knowles, the well-known lecturer in Economics.

(Continued from page 28).

at is not so much the health and happiness of the greatest number, but the control of the physical efficiency of the workers and their families as units of Labour. For this purpose bureaucratic machinery is required, because popular local government would prevent any such 'class' legislation being carried out. The result of the unification of Government Departments will be a vast medical bureaucracy destined to control the health and habits of the proletariat. The programme will include:

- (1) The creation of a Health Cabinet with autocratic powers.
- (2) The establishment of a State Medical Service.
- (3) Routine Medical Inspection and treatment of adults and children.
- (4) A State salaried service of midwives and nurses.
- (5) State Control of the Family by means of Welfare Supervisors and State medical officers.

It is in the last named direction that Catholics have most to fear, and it is not only possible, but probable, that 'eugenic' measures of a drastic character will be introduced. Therefore I would urge the readers of this paper to keep their eyes well open to future developments of the new Health Ministry.

AGNES MORT.

At the recent election of Borough Councillors in Marylebone four women were returned at the top of the poll.



## THE ADVANTAGE OF LIFE ASSURANCE OF WOMEN.

Most women have an instinct toward thrift. It is said that the French nation is so thrifty and prosperous because it is "Madame" who holds the purse strings and controls the family expenditure; but though women are quick to see the necessity of saving, comparatively few have any idea of how to invest their savings. Undoubtedly the first-class Assurance Companies provide the safest and most profitable schemes for the investment of the annual savings, whether large or small, so a few words about Assurance Companies in general and some of their schemes in detail may be of interest.

The first traces of Life Assurance as we now know it was in the 16th Century: in 1756 the Equitable Company began to manage its business on a scientific basis, and from that time onward the trend of legislation has been to bring Assurance business more and more under the control of the State and to protect the policy holder in every possible way.

At the present time all Life Assurance Companies have to deposit £20,000 in Court before commencing business, and every Insurance Company must deposit its accounts annually at the board of trade with a statement of its insurance business, and in every fifth year it must have a valuation of its liabilities made by a competent actuary.

An Assurance Company may be constituted by Royal Charter or by registration under the Companies Acts, and there are two kinds of Assurance Companies:

- 1st. Mutual Societies, of which the assured are members and divide the profits among themselves.
- 2nd. Proprietary Offices, in which the capital is subscribed by the shareholders, and the profits are divided between them and the policy holders.

Of these two classes, the latter is the more ordinary and the former the more satisfactory for the policy holders. One of these Mutual Companies, the National Mutual Life Assurance Society which was founded in 1830, has since the war, opened a Women's Bureau, in order to give information and guidance to women desiring to invest in a Life Assurance, and some of its schemes are of special advantage to women. Of these, one of the most attractive is the

### ENDOWMENT ASSURANCE WITH PROFITS.

The annual premium, or amount to be paid yearly, differs according to age, but for example, a woman aged 25 next birthday, can for an annual premium of £7 15 2, receive, on reaching the age of 50, £200 and her share of the Company's profits during the 25 years she has paid the premiums, and these profits make a very substantial addition to the £200. Should the policy holder die before the age of 50, her heirs will receive the £200 with the profits due at the date of her death.

### SOME ADVANTAGES OF THIS SCHEME.

- 1st. For one who is dependent on her earnings it provides safely and profitably for her future.
- 2nd. For one who has a private income it provides a sum of money which she can use as she likes. In the case of inherited money there is often a moral, if not a legal, obligation to leave the money to certain people, but money received from an Endowment Assurance belongs absolutely to the assured. She can use it herself, give it to a needy friend, a Mission Church, or some deserving charity, or anything else without the slightest qualm of conscience.
- 3rd. With the aid of a Post Office Savings Bank book odd shillings can be put by during the year and earn interest until the date when the premium is to be paid, when it is quite probable more than the amount needed will be found waiting in the post office.
- 4th. In case of necessity the assured can borrow a certain amount from the Society without delay and without expense, except stamp duty.
- 5th. Should the assured be unable to keep up the payment of her premiums, she can after three premiums are paid, receive a sum in cash representing the surrender value of her policy; or she can receive a paid-up policy upon which no further premiums would be required.

Then there is the DEFERRED ANNUITY SCHEME. By this, a woman aged 25 next

birthday can, for an annual premium of £8 8s. od. secure an annuity of £20, beginning at the age of 50. Should she die before reaching that age all the premiums paid would be returned: on the other hand, if she lived to be a 100 she would be sure of £20 yearly after the age of 50.

And there are schemes for the ASSURANCE OF CHILDREN, which enable parents to make adequate provision for their children's future—and for the patriotic with a little money to spare there are excellent methods of obtaining War Bonds on the instalment plan. The Assurance Companies, by the way, are investing huge sums in Government bonds, so even in taking an Endowment Assurance the investor can feel she is helping her country as well as herself.

There are further schemes of Life Assurance in order to meet individual needs, but it is impossible in such a brief article to go more fully into the matter—enough however has been said to show that the policy holder is protected in every way, and there can be no safer or more profitable way for a woman to invest her savings than to take out an Assurance Policy in a first-class Life Assurance Society.

A. H. BENNETT.

### THE "UNIVERSE" PAMPHLETS.

We have received two interesting pamphlets published by the "Universe," "Deeds, not Words" (2d.) and "The Physician" (1d.). The first is a "plain statement of the actions of the Pope for the benefit of humanity during the War." Even many Catholics may not have realised to what extent the Holy Father has been able to relieve the sufferings of stricken humanity. The exchange of prisoners of war, the victualling of occupied countries, the tracing of missing relatives, the prevention of deportation, these are but a few of the many good offices the Pope has been able to perform.

The second pamphlet, "The Physician," is a sermon by his Eminence Cardinal Bourne preached to the Catholic doctors present in London for the International Medical Congress, 1913. Over a thousand Catholic doctors assembled in Westminster Cathedral on the occasion.

These pamphlets may be obtained from "The Universe," Effingham House, Arundel Street, London, W.C.2.

### PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS WOMEN'S HOSPITAL LEAGUE.

This League has been founded to make provision for professional women in times of severe sickness, when trained nursing is required. Surgeons, nursing homes, and trained nurses are beyond the means of the professional women worker, and as a general rule there is nothing for her but the ward of an ordinary hospital. By paying the small sum of 2/6 per annum to the above League, any woman may guard against times of sickness. Members of the League are treated as private patients and are placed in a cubicle or private ward. Information will be supplied by the Secretary: Miss Mildred Ransom, 195-97, Edgware Road, W.2.

### PENAL REFORM LEAGUE.

On March 28th the Home Secretary received a deputation from the Penal Reform League and 22 other associations, on the subject of prison reform. The C.W.S.S. was represented by Miss Kathleen Fitzgerald, B.A. Among the reforms advocated were: the appointment of women governors and medical officers for women's prisons, trained women nurses in all prisons, the provision of reception homes for unconvicted prisoners, the discontinuance of dietary punishment, and unnecessary humiliation in dress, and the abolition of the spy-hole. The deputation also asked that when a Court is cleared on account of indecent evidence, young people of both sexes should be asked to leave, and not women only. Mr. Shortt received the deputation sympathetically, and said that a great deal had been done in prison reform during the last ten or twenty years. There seems, however, no immediate prospect of the reforms advocated being set on foot. They can be accelerated by public opinion.

### LONDON AND BRANCH NEWS.

The office, 55, Berners Street, W.1., will be closed on April 17th for the Easter vacation. Correspondence attended to as usual.

On Tuesday, April 15th, a meeting of the C.W.S.S. will be held at the Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, at 7.30, when Miss C. Leadley Browne, M.B.E., will speak on Pensions for the Widows of Civilians. The chair will be taken by Miss Kathleen Fitzgerald, B.A.

### LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH.

The meeting arranged for March 27th was unavoidably cancelled.



## THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.

Office—55, Berners St., Oxford St., London, W.  
 Patron: Blessed Joan of Arc. Colours: Blue, White & Gold  
 Organ—"The Catholic Citizen," 1d. 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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**At 3 o'clock**

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