

THE

Catholic Citizen

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Daughter of the ancient Eve,
We know the gifts ye gave and give;
Who knows the gifts which you shall give,
Daughter of the Newer Eve?

—Francis Thompson.

Another Trial of St. Joan*

By CHRISTOPHER ST. JOHN

Miss Sackville-West's biography of St. Joan has been warmly recommended to Catholic readers by many Catholic literary critics, including Father Herbert Thurston, whose eulogy in "The Month" is a guarantee not only that it contains *nihil contra fidem et mores* but that it is historically accurate. Nevertheless the attitude taken by the biographer to St. Joan and to the questions raised by her extraordinary career is not the Catholic attitude. It is easier to say what it is not, than what it is. It eludes definition, through its vagueness and inconsistency, but some idea of its general nature can be gained from a study of the last chapter entitled "Aftermath," in which the method pursued throughout the book is expounded. I quote the following passage as an incentive to this study:

"I have suggested that neither of the two possible lines of approach—the scientific and the religious—is alone sufficient to explain the mystery. The religious, of course, offers the quicker way out of the difficulty; blind acceptance to some minds is more agreeable than the critical and enquiring attitude. The whole problem is simplified for those who can just believe that God sent three of His Saints to instruct Jeanne; for those who can throw themselves in short into the frame of mind of the good believing Christian. Unfortunately for some of us this attitude is impossible blindly to adopt. I have been painfully torn myself."

I cannot identify this "religious line" with the Catholic line, primarily because "blind acceptance" is not in the Catholic line. The Vatican Council condemns "blind faith," and stipulates with St. Paul that the obedience of our faith should be in accordance with reason. Nor does our faith prohibit the "critical and enquiring attitude" which Miss Sackville-West prefers to "blind acceptance." It is very much to the point to recall

* *Saint Joan of Arc*. By V. Sackville-West. (Cobden Sanderson, 10s.)

the diligent investigation, lasting seventeen years, of the cause for Joan of Arc's canonisation. Does Miss Sackville-West imagine that the Catholic theologians who conducted it simply threw themselves into the frame of mind of the "good believing Christian," and "just believed" that God had sent three of His Saints to instruct Joan without bothering to examine the evidence for and against the truth of her testimony that she had seen them, heard them, and obeyed them? Theologians are always relentless in their discrimination between the visions and voices which are the media between the soul and God, and those which arise from an active, rich, imperfectly controlled subliminal consciousness, but never more so than when the visions and voices are exterior, and described in terms of objective reality. "All these," writes St. John of the Cross, "may happen to the bodily senses in the way of God, but inasmuch as they are exterior, and in the body, there is less certainty of their being from God." It seems to me very strange that Miss Sackville-West who is deeply interested in St. Joan's mystical experience, should not have studied it in its theological aspect. I am also astonished that she should represent it as unique. St. Theresa's whole life was guided by Voices. What simplifies the so-called "problem" for the Catholic is that what happened to St. Joan has happened to many other saints. The humanly impossible mission to which she was called does not stand alone.

All biographers of St. Joan go to the same source for their material. The official text of the Trial in 1431, and of the Revision of the Trial, known as the "Rehabilitation", in 1455 supplies them with a narrative, rich in minute details, of her life from her infancy at Domremy to her death at the stake at Rouen. It is only in the presentation of this material, in the style in

which it is shaped, in the impression that the story makes on the biographer's mind, that one biography of St. Joan differs from another. Miss Sackville-West treats the story as "a case," presents it as if she were a judge, and her readers a jury. She subjects the depositions of St. Joan and of those who came in contact with her to a scrutiny which some members of the jury may think is needlessly prolonged. The conclusion to which she guides them at last is that St. Joan had no especial qualifications for her tremendous mission with one important exception. "She did possess the power to accomplish what she had undertaken." The power is attributed to the intensity of her "inner persuasions." "It was her single-mindedness which enabled her to inspire disheartened men, and to bend reluctant princes to her will." This summing-up is not free from misdirection. The jury ought to have been reminded that St. Joan herself gives evidence that it was not she, but God, Who did all. The mission was far more tremendous than the judge represents. It was to fight for the world of God against the world of men, even unto death. And it was the death which was the victory for God.

Miss Sackville-West seldom makes a statement of fact without giving an authority for it. Her book is a model of careful documentation. But some of the deductions from the facts, so painstakingly collected and authenticated, may be challenged. For example, the deduction from the fact that St. Joan loved finery that she was very feminine. I would point out that in her age, men loved finery as much as women, and were of the two sexes more elaborately dressed. The deduction from the fact that she never roused carnal desires in the men with whom she was associated, that she was plain and unattractive is equally unsound. From the literary point of view, Miss Sackville-West excels in the passages describing the scenes of the chief incidents in St. Joan's career. They are the result of direct observation, for Miss Sackville-West has visited them. Here she drops the juridical style—with its maddening reiteration of "On the other hand"—and writes with the touch of the true poet. The book is illustrated by some good maps, and lovely photographs of Domremy, Chinon, and other places associated with St. Joan. I hope now this trial is over, St. Joan's case will not be re-opened again for a long time. If some publisher would re-issue the English translation of the "Procès," and it were widely read, it would be realized that biographies of St. Joan are unnecessary.

Southern Rhodesia

NATIVES REGISTRATION ACT, 1936

On July 24th, Mr. Malcolm Macdonald, Secretary of State for the Dominions, received an informal deputation from the British Commonwealth League, which was introduced by Mrs. Corbett Ashby. The chief speaker was Miss Alison Neilans.

The object of the deputation was to ask for further information and to put certain anxieties before Mr. Macdonald in regard to the proposals in the Natives Registration Bill for Southern Rhodesia which has been adopted by the Legislature. One section of that Bill, as explained by the Southern Rhodesian Premier, is definitely to legalise and provide facilities for concubinage for the native labourers residing in locations in townships. This so-called concubinage, under the conditions of a large floating labour population, is almost indistinguishable from legalised prostitution. The deputation asked Mr. Macdonald that:

- (1) No permit to women to stay or reside in native locations shall be given or withheld on condition of submission to any periodic examination for venereal diseases.
- (2) Any person procuring any woman to be a concubine by force, fraud, false pretences, or threats shall be punished.
- (3) Any person who makes any profit by procuring women as concubines, or for immoral purposes for the use of any other person shall be punished.
- (4) Any township where such permits are given to women shall appoint a person, not being the person who grants the permits, and preferably a trained woman welfare officer responsible to government, to whom these women can have access in case of need. In any large township, such as Bulwayo and Salisbury, the appointment of a trained woman welfare officer with status and authority is absolutely necessary and should be compulsory.
- (5) In no case shall permits be given to stay or reside for purposes of prostitution.

The deputation also stated that the Premier's proposal was to recognise and give facilities for concubinage and suggested that what was of primary and urgent importance was to give facilities for a settled family life for native men and women—this was a point particularly stressed by Mrs. Laughton Mathews. This did not only mean that married men should be encouraged to bring their wives with them to the township locations, but that there should be a real, effective and consistently pursued endeavour to provide an environment for the African native population engaged in labour in or around the townships which will make a decent and responsible community and family life possible.

Mr. Macdonald was sympathetic and said that he would accept a Memorandum on the subject.

In the House of Commons on July 21st, Mr. T. Johnson (Labour) secured the Adjournment of the House to discuss the Natives' Registration Act. Mr. Johnson said he regretted that when this Measure was submitted to the Secretary of State for the Dominions, it received his endorsement, and he hoped that the latter would see his way to send a message to Southern Rhodesia asking that his signature should be annulled, as he had power to do within twelve months from signing the Order.

(Continued on page 77)

Notes and Comments

Following the good news of the foundation of the Australian Section of St. Joan's Alliance announced in our last issue, our readers will rejoice to hear of the first Public Meeting held at the Catholic Central Library, Melbourne, on August 6th (Feast of Our Lady of the Snow). Unfortunately the General President, Mrs. J. A. Lyons, was at the last minute prevented by ill-health from being present. The Chairman, Miss K. M. Walsh, presided over a packed meeting, and the speakers included Rev. Philip Murphy, O.F.M., Father Marius, O.F.M., Father Hackett, S.J., and Prior Clery, O.C.C., who said that unlike most travellers, Miss Flynn had brought back to Australia something more valuable than gold. Miss Anna Brennan, Vice-President of St. Joan's Alliance, spoke enthusiastically of the work of the Alliance, and of its fields of work for the future in Australia; and Miss Flynn, the indefatigable Hon. Secretary, to whose efforts the success of the meeting is due, told of her experiences with the Alliance both at Geneva and in London last year.

The good ship of St. Joan is now well launched in Australian waters and we shall follow her progress with the most lively interest.

* * * *

The new Draft Unemployment Assistance Regulations published in July are a step nearer to equality between men and women. Equal assistance is to be given to young persons under 21 living at home, and 15s. a week to both sexes of whatever age who are living in lodgings. The difference of 2s. between the rates for two classes of men and women has been lowered to 1s, instead of being completely abolished, so that the fallacy that a woman needs less for her maintenance than a man is continued. While welcoming the improvements we regret that Government has not had the courage to endorse fully the principle of an equal standard of maintenance between men and women.

* * * *

We regret that in spite of requests from the Women's Organisation in this country the Government has not seen fit to include a woman in the Royal Commission of enquiry on Palestine. The presence of a woman on the Commission would, we believe, have been of great help and encouragement to women giving evi-

dence, more especially to those less accustomed to appear in public.

* * * *

We are grateful to Miss Rathbone for having raised the matter of Tanganyika Marriage Customs in the House on July 22nd. We quote the following from the *Hansard* of that date:

Miss Rathbone asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that a girl named Kekwe, in Tanganyika, was recently sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment for the manslaughter of the man chosen by her parents to marry her against her will; and whether he will consider promoting a law in Tanganyika, and in other British dependencies in Africa, requiring notice of intending marriage to be given to the tribal authority, who shall register such marriage and prevent it if the girl refuses, or will he take other steps to prevent the forced marriage of African girls?

Mr. Ormsby-Gore: I have seen a reference in the Press to the case mentioned by the hon. member. As regards the general question involved, I understand that in all British African Dependencies women are free to bring cases of attempted coercion to the notice of the authorities, in which event appropriate steps would be taken. I am asking the Governors of the Dependencies concerned whether the present practice is in their view, sufficient to prevent abuses, and if not, what further steps they consider might be taken in the matter.

* * * *

At the Conference of Representatives of Women's Organisations to meet Miss F. M. Graves, member of the British Delegation to this year's Assembly of the League of Nations, St. Joan's Alliance was represented by Miss Harley Bacon and Miss Christine Spender. The Conference was organised by the L.N.U. Women's Advisory Council to discuss points on the agenda of the forthcoming Assembly. Miss Spender urged that further consideration should be given to the question of assisting the Russian Women Refugees in the Far East.

* * * *

We offer deep sympathy to our members Mrs. and Miss Monica Whately on the death of Major Whately; to Dr. Mary Cardwell on the death of her mother, and to Miss Meredith on the death of her brother. R.I.P.

We ask the prayers of our readers for the repose of the souls of the above, and for Miss Dora Martyn of Syon Abbey, South Brent, Devon, who died recently. Miss Martyn was a member of the Alliance for very many years. R.I.P.

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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Traffic in Women

During the fifteenth session of the Traffic in Women and Children Committee of the League of Nations, reports on the rehabilitation of adult prostitutes were considered. These reports, submitted by Governments and voluntary associations are of interest, not so much for the sake of constructive plans for the rehabilitation of prostitutes, as for the worldwide survey of prostitution and its causes which they afford. Even to the blindest anti-feminist it must be apparent that this question is one of the general social inequality of women. Wherever women are kept out of public life, wherever their economic position is one of marked inferiority, and their education neglected—there prostitution flourishes, and social service for prevention and cure hardly exists. Dr. Kemp, one of the experts assisting the Committee, pointed out that one of the most important means for the suppression of prostitution is "a general reduction of social inequality and, in particular, improvement of working conditions for women." In this connection, the reports give domestic service as the employment from which most prostitutes come. The loneliness and monotony of this employment combined with bad pay and long hours and the general feeling that it is an inferior employment make it a bad life for the unstable type of girl. It is regrettable that it is the employment to which ex-prostitutes are almost always sent when their rehabilitation in an institution is considered to be completed.

An outcome of bad social conditions is broken and immoral home life, and it is out of these broken homes that prostitutes in the main are found to have come.

As to the prospects of rehabilitation of adult women the reports are almost always unani-

mously pessimistic. Subnormality, inebbled character, social ostracism appear almost unsurmountable obstacles and no mere prospect of a respectable life and living wage will prove a strong enough motive to overcoming them. The more hopeful reports of the work of the prophylactic centres in the U.S.S.R., of the Catholic Societies, and the Salvation Army, and the fact that marriage is often a happy solution of the problem have this in common, that by all of them the woman is given a sense of value and personal dignity. The case of the U.S.S.R. is no doubt exceptional as social ostracism and the inducement to return to prostitution are both lacking there, but the deeper reason for the success in Russia would seem to be that the woman is made to feel her value to the community. In marriage she is necessary to the happiness of another creature. The religious appeal includes these lesser motives in the knowledge of her dignity as a child of God made in His image and likeness.

A bare mention is given of the opinion that measures for the education of men should not be neglected as a means of suppressing prostitution. Until this opinion gains ground, measures for the suppression of prostitution must necessarily be incomplete, as it is evident that men who "profit" by prostitution such as souteneurs, tenanciers of brothels, traffickers, and above all clients of maisons tolérées are as much in need of reform as the women concerned.

The draft convention on the suppression of the exploitation of prostitution presents the old difficulty to those who framed it: that is how to reaffirm their belief that the abolition of maisons tolérées and state regulation and registration of prostitutes is the chief means of

stopping exploitation, and, at the same time allow of Governments signing the Convention when they have not yet done away with these evils. The last convention was so watered down for this purpose that many abolitionists felt bound to oppose it. The present draft is a great improvement and states in its principle clause that "the High Contracting Parties agree to punish any person who exploits immorality either by aiding, abetting, or facilitating the prostitution of third parties or by deriving any material profit therefrom." But as there are several countries which are contemplating abolition but have not yet sufficiently paved the way for it, and might otherwise be prepared to sign the Convention, the Advisory Committee "contemplates the possibility, for States who see fit to do so, to make certain reservations" particularly with regard to the clause given above. So that although regulationist countries may sign the convention they will have to give their reasons for making reservations and so show the weakness of their position.

I. M. DICKINSON

International Notes

Our colleagues in the U.S.A. are to be congratulated on the success of their efforts for the issue of a special postage stamp in honour of Susan B. Anthony. In a letter to the Chairman of the Susan B. Anthony Memorial Committee, Postmaster General Farley wrote:

This stamp will be issued on August 26th, the date the Secretary of State certified that thirty-six States of the Union had favourably approved the Woman's Suffrage Amendment, the cause to which Miss Anthony devoted the major part of her life, and the result of whose efforts contributed so largely to the welfare of women and mankind generally. It is a real pleasure for me to have this opportunity to pay tribute to the late Miss Anthony, and indirectly to all women of our country who so valiantly carried on the work begun by this great crusader and emancipator.

On the new stamp (3 cents.) is a portrait of Susan B. Anthony, and along the lower edge is inscribed "Suffrage for Women."

In Belgium two women now hold seats in the Lower House and three in the Senate, two of the latter being our co-religionists, Mlle. Baers and Mme. Maréchal. We had the pleasure of meeting Mlle. Baers at the Archbishop's reception to the Catholic delegates of the Third International Conference on Social Work.

The Joint Committee of Major International Associations met in Geneva on July 6th and 7th to discuss the question of unemployment among young intellectual workers. We rejoice to note that the following resolution was passed by the Committee to be submitted, together with conclusions and recommendations, to the Intellectual Co-operation Commission of the League of Nations.

This Liaison Committee, considering that women equally with men, have a right to the full development of their faculties and that the right to work is a human right, declares that the following considerations apply equally to both sexes.

Among the thirty organisations composing the Joint Committee of Major International Associations are: the Catholic International Union for Social Service; the Catholic International Union for International Studies; the International Union of Catholic Women's Leagues; the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship; the International Council of Women; the International Federation of University Women; the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

* * * *

The first women's manifesto for the coming elections has been issued by the All-India Women's Conference at Vizagapatam. Affirming that the educated women of India are fully alive to their duties and responsibilities, it demands the removal of sex disqualifications and wide measures of social and educational reform. It is accompanied by eight questions for candidates, who are to be asked to support (1) The removal of untouchability and sex disabilities, legal and social; (2) Educational reform, including free compulsory and universal primary education; (3) Rural reconstruction, including the development of village industries and improved sanitation; (4) The abolition of purdah and polygamy; (5) The abolition of early marriage; (6) Maternity benefit and additional child and maternity welfare centres; (7) Unemployment and health insurance; (8) The protection of civil liberties.—*Women's Freedom League Bulletin.*

* * * *

We learn from our member Mrs. de Fonseka that Municipal Suffrage has just been granted to the women of Ceylon. There is one woman member in the State Council.

* * * *

The new Congress of Cuba contains seven women members.

S. A. B.

The Third International Conference on Social Work

BY SUSAN LIVEING

The Third International Conference on Social Work has come and gone. Its subject—Social Work and the Community—covered a field so vast, and the points discussed were so many and differing—Health, Education, Recreation, Material Welfare, Social Adjustment—together with important general sessions on “Recent changes in community life,” on “The aesthetic, social, moral, and spiritual effects of the social services on community life,” and “The place of the voluntary worker,” that in a short article, scattered and cursory impressions are all that can be gathered up. But the Conference was an important international event, and it is a wonderful thing that in this time of European turmoil and anxiety—of war and rumours of war—social workers from no less than twenty-six countries should have gathered together for a week of whole-hearted thought on the social problems which face the welfare of the community and on their possible solutions.

The Catholic arrangements for the Conference were organised by a joint committee of the C.C.I.R. and the C.S.G., and began with Mass in Westminster Cathedral on July 12th, with Father Tigar, S.J., as the preacher. He dwelt on the contribution of the great encyclicals to social justice.

The main question before the Conference was the effect of the social services on local community life. How are we to preserve what is good in local conditions while pressing on to greater development? In building up we must not destroy. This point was finely made by Père Charles, S.J., and Dr. Letitia Fairfield in their contributions to the symposium on “Recent changes in local community life.” Père Charles, speaking from his wide knowledge of the Central African missions, on how local community life may, from the sociological standpoint be disintegrated by the introduction of a foreign civilisation, impressed upon those who would undertake work among the natives of Central Africa the vital importance of a sound ethnological knowledge of the manners and customs of the people—a knowledge unbiassed by sentiment. To say that the black woman because she tills the fields is nothing other than a beast of burden, is a wholly wrong statement.

The same point was driven home by Dr. Fairfield, though in a different connection, when

she appealed for the preservation in the new housing enterprises, of the beautiful elements in slum life—the neighbourliness and mutual help. “Slum population,” she said, “is much more socially knit than is realised, and when rehousing, these closely knit bonds are a factor to be taken into consideration. When we break up these areas and the population migrates, we break up, not only what is bad, but something of real social and spiritual value.”

The importance of the family was emphasised in all the discussions. Among Catholic delegates the impression was gained that satisfaction with material progress was fraught with danger lest religion should be looked on merely as a useful handmaid, not an essential to the welfare of the community. The need for the spiritual values was well expressed by Père Charles in his defence of the native against the charge of being merely interested in material comfort. “It is quite false,” he said, “to think that you can give the native material happiness unless you also give him spiritual happiness. Something essential will be wanting if you deny development to his high spiritual ability.” And Dr. Fairfield in her plea for freedom: “There is a risk and danger that social service might be used to keep people away from spiritual freedom—the most precious thing in life. If this should happen, all our work is wasted.”

The opportunities for contact with the social workers of other countries, and for appreciation of their work were a most valuable part of the gathering and no one could fail to be impressed with the friendliness shown by all, and with the appreciation by the foreign delegates of England’s kindness and hospitality. The Government reception was magnificent, but perhaps our Catholic reception was even more appreciated. The delegates said that it was so friendly, *intime* was the word they used. The fact that they were received not only by His Grace, but by the Mayor of Westminster, and that so many prominent Catholics were present to welcome them touched them deeply. For English Catholics as well, to be able to welcome Catholic social workers from so many countries with such friendly hospitality, was an opportunity which few would have missed, while the fatherly address of His Grace, and the gracious sincerity of his welcome, made a

large number of people very happy.

One may, however, feel that our collaboration would have been even more effective had there been more preparation beforehand of the subject matter. More study would have brought forward more suggestions. Do we English Catholics sufficiently appreciate the wonder of our inheritance? We possess the great encyclicals, the embodiment of the social teaching of the Church, which if only put into practice would deliver us from the miseries of the present time. We have a great mission, the mission of making that teaching more widely known, more widely practised in a world, in which in Father Tigar’s words, “a wounded and bleeding civilisation is slowly dying, because it has apostatised from Christianity and has enthroned Mammon in the place of Christ.”

If the outcome of this Conference could be to make us realise that we must make ourselves more competent by study and by practical social work to make the social teaching of the Church a power in the world, Catholics would then have reason to rejoice.

Equal Pay

The National Association of Women Civil Servants (31 Marsham Street) has published a pamphlet (1½d.) entitled “Equal Pay: The Government’s Defence Examined.” This pamphlet ably refutes certain arguments put forward by the Government spokesmen during the Parliamentary Debate of April 1st, 2nd and 6th when they opposed the claim for equal pay for men and women in the Common Classes of the Civil Service. C. S.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH

Hon. Secretary: Miss Bowden,
22 Fern Grove, Liverpool 8.

The Annual Garden Party took place at Birkenhead by kind invitation of the Misses Barry. In spite of very unkind weather the meeting was enjoyed by all and our funds benefited by over £2. We were glad to hear Miss Florence Barry and Miss Nancy Parnell again, and to welcome one of our original members, Miss Parle, to whom Miss Barry said she owed her first encouragement in feminist work in Liverpool.

The following resolution on Equal Pay was carried unanimously, and has been sent to the Prime Minister and all the local M.P.s.:

This Meeting of the Liverpool and District Branch of St. Joan’s Social and Political Alliance calls upon the Government to establish one salary scale in each grade of the Civil Service, to apply equally to men and women.

We hope to hold a Social towards the end of September to open our new winter session.

HON. TREASURER’S NOTE

September may spell sadness or security. It depends on you which it is for St. Joan’s Alliance. Sadness, if through your neglect, subscriptions and donations have not been sent. Security if you have sent or will send quickly, for then the rent will be paid and work for the winter will go forward.

We are most grateful to all those who have answered the appeals for donations.

Please send finished holiday clothes for the barrow.
C. J. GARRARD

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Minimum Annual Subscriptions	5 0
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* Jubilee gifts.

NOTICE TO MEMBERS

On Saturday, October 10th, there will be an expedition to Beaconsfield where Miss Graham will kindly provide tea, in aid of the funds. Meet at Paddington Station for the 2-25 train. Railway ticket 2s. 9d., and tea 1s.

Members wishing to see the model village of Bekonscot will be able to do so.

Those wishing to join the party are asked to notify the Secretary as soon as possible, and they are invited to bring their friends.

SOUTHERN RHODESIA—Continued from p. 72.

Mr. Creech Jones (Labour) said that what they were witnessing to-day was an introduction of State recognition of a piece of legalised prostitution which for the moment had the name of concubinage, but it was concubinage whereby the woman when she was left by the man, who returned from the territory from which he came, could live only in so far as she was able to sell herself to another native.

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE.

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