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

VOL. V., No. 5.

May 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.

SOME POINTS IN THE HOUSING PROBLEM.

By V. M. CRAWFORD.

Day by day the Press gives us so many details of the lack of houses throughout the country and the shocking over-crowding in most industrial districts, that no general summary of the situation seems needful. We all know by this time that an appalling shortage of houses is one of the melancholy results of four years of war, and one that is likely to perpetuate unrest and discontent in our midst for many a year to come. For if the Israelites of old could not make bricks without straw, it is equally true that the municipal authorities cannot build houses without bricks. And it is the shortage of bricks-together with the many obstacles in the way of acquiring land at a reasonable price-that is bound to delay the building of the much-needed houses, however zealous the new Housing Commissioners may prove themselves to be.

There are, however, several aspects of the Housing problem of special interest to women, and more particularly to all who are keen on a higher standard of home life and comfort than has prevailed in the past. And from that point of view the present position has some very encouraging features. The first point gained is that the old solution of high blocks of tenement buildings with sunless courts, steep narrow stair-cases and gloomy exteriors is definitely abandoned. To-day no one suggests building them. The whole tendency is happily towards garden surburbs and garden villages carefully laid out to profit by all natural advantages of trees and aspect, the houses semi-detached, or in small groups of six or eight, each house with a strip of garden, besides play-grounds for the children and allotments for the growers of vegetables. The

regulation for rural districts is to be not more than eight houses to the acre, and even in town areas the number is to be restricted to twelve. Every new village or suburb would have, as a matter of course, its institute or village hall as a centre of social life; the conveniences of gas and electric light could easily be supplied while the village itself would be linked up to the nearest town by train or tram. Thus the City of Bradford is planning ten garden villages in the surrounding country, all to be connected with Bradford by municipal trams. Such, in briefest outline, are the recommendations of the Tudor Walters Report, issued by the Local Government Board last year, which forms the basis of the Government's policy. From the point of view of the family and the health of the nation it ! is on absolutely right lines.

The second point of importance is that, for the first time in housing matters, women are really being consulted! The country is waking up to the fact that women have practical views as to the sort of houses they wish to live in, and that it might be as well to ascertain what they have to say, if only on such small details as to where the perambulator is to stand and where the bath should be fixed. This in itself is an immense step forward, domestic architecture having been in the past a purely male preserve.

Already in 1917 the Women's Labour League (now the Women's Section of the Labour Party) led by Dr. Marion Phillips, issued an admirable leaflet to working women containing some excellent alternative plans for cottages, and asking pertinent questions, to which answers were invited, concerning

THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN.

such matters as the much-debated need for a parlour, the advantages of a gas-cooker and so forth. A great number of interesting replies were received, shewing how keen working-women are on the improvement of their home conditions. The aim of the Women's Labour League was to set before them a new standard in home comfort, to design an ideal house, towards the realisation of which all should strive, and to include among the necessaries of the working woman's home various labour-saving contrivances which hitherto have only been within reach of the more wellto-do. Yet it is the working-woman, with a houseful of children, who needs them the most. It is obviously only by means of skilful townplanning, and the grouping of cottages together that such conveniences as a communal laundry, with hot water radiating from it to every house, and possibly also a communal kitchen, become feasible. Many young women who have learned the conveniences of associated life in munition hostels will eagerly welcome such innovations as releasing them from part of the monotonous drudgery of the isolated home.

The Government, also, has been conscious of the need for expert female advice. It submitted the comprehensive Tudor Walters Report, the work of male housing experts, to a Women's Housing Sub-Committee of the Advisory Council to the Ministry of Reconstruction. This committee, under the chairmanship of Lady Emmott, consisted wholly of women, and having carefully studied the men's Report, they made a series of small but valuable suggestions " with special reference to the convenience of the house-wife." They stressed the absolute need for a parlour, a scullery and a larder in every house to be erected; they assumed three bedrooms everywhere; they discussed the bath problem in all its domestic aspects; they pleaded for outhouses and coal stores and a sufficiency of cupboards. The much harassed labourer's wife, struggling to bring up her family in two rooms, with no cooking conveniences and with no water laid on, would indeed be amazed were she to read these carefully thought out proposals for her future comfort. The ideal

house that these expert ladies had in view seems almost too perfect for attainment, but we have now a standard available, and a mass of detailed and practical information bearing upon it, and however long the working-man and his wife may have to wait for their new cottage they will surely never again be content to pass their lives in the hideous and deplorable erections due to the jerry builder of the past.

It will naturally be asked where the money for such houses is to come from, and this is indeed the crux of the whole problem. Owing to high prices it is at the moment impossible to build satisfactory houses at an economic rent that working men and women can afford to pay. The urgency, however, is so great that the problem has become a national one. 500,000 houses must be built immediately and 100,000 a year in addition in order to maintoin the supply. Such a task cannot possibly be left to private enterprise. The Government therefore has pledged itself to finance any satisfactory scheme proposed by a local authority over and above the sum produced by a 1d. rate. How much this will ultimately cost the nation no one as yet can say: we may at least reasonably hope that the money so spent will prove a good investment.

WOMEN AND THE LAW.

A public meeting in support of Lord Buckmaster's Bill, was held at the Central Hall, Westminster, on May 5th. The meeting organised by the Women's Freedom League was supported by a number of Women's Societies, including the C.W.S.S. The speakers included Mr. Holford Knight and Mr. Bell, who have done so much to get the legal profession opened to women. Mr. Lunn, M.P., promised the meeting the support of the Labour Party for the Bill. Miss Helen Normanton, B.A., and Miss Ingram, who are waiting to enter the legal profession, and Mrs. Finlayson Gould, for the C.W.S.S., also addressed the meeting. A resolution, urging the Government to grant facilities for the Bill was passed unanimously.

The Chair was taken by Councillor Edith How-Martyn.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

There will be universal rejoicing among Catholics—and among many non-Catholics at the glad tidings that Blessed Joan of Arc is to be canonised in the Autumn. The warrior maid has always had a special attraction for suffragists, and was honoured by them before the C.W.S.S., whose patron she is, was founded. But it is France that will most rejoice, and where no doubt great celebrations will be held in her honour; but devotion to Blessed Joan is spreading in England, and English men and women will join with France in rejoicing at the Church's recognition of the sanctity of the great French heroine.

All members of the C.W.S.S. will hear with regret that Father T. J. Walshe and his sister, Mrs. Macdonald, are leaving England for California early in June. Father Walshe has been a staunch suporter of the C.W.S.S since its foundation, at a time when the word "suffragist" was in bad odour with many pious people. The Society is greatly indebted to Father Walshe in many ways, and his unswerving faith in our Cause has been an inspiration. Mrs. Macdonald, too, will be greatly missed. She has been a zealous promoter of our Liverpool Branch, and has done much to make the "Catholic Citizen" known in Liverpool. We wish our friends good luck. California's gain is our loss.

The Belgian Chamber has adopted a fanciful scheme of woman suffrage. Our own Franchise Bill is foolish enough, but the Belgian Bill surpasses it. According to reports in the daily press, the vote will be given on the following plan :

* * *

To widows, not remarried, of soldiers who lost their lives during the war; mothers of soldiers killed, if they are widows; widows of civilians shot by Germans; and women imprisoned during the German occupation.

Why not votes for women on the same terms as men? It would save a deal of trouble, and much bad blood.

* * * *

We congratulate Italian women on the progress of the women's movement in Italy. Dr. W.R.N.S. are issuing shortly.

Margherita Ancona, writing in the April issue of the International Women Suffrage News. says that the Sacchi Law, which was passed almost without discussion by the Chamber, will certainly be passed soon by the Senate. The Sacchi Law, Dr. Ancona explains, in the first place abolishes the law of marital authority, and gives married women the full use of all their property outside the dowry. It gives women full entry to the legal professions, &c., admission to public offices, and extends to them the right of guardianship. It would be difficult to exaggerate the influence this Law will have on the progress of Italian women. We speak in another column of the movement in Spain and the Argentines.

* * * *

The Institution of Naval Architects has decided to admit women on the same terms as men, and three women have been elected members of the Institute. The proposer and seconder of the resolution to admit women, Sir William Smith and Sir Alfred Yarrow, spoke in terms of high praise of the work done by women in naval architecture.

Among the Labour Clauses adopted by the Peace Conference, the seventh lays down the principle " that men and women should receive equal remuneration for work of equal value.

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The National Union of Teachers has passed by a majority of nearly 20,000 votes, a resolution in favour of equal pay for men and women teachers.

* * * *

We offer our congratulations to our member, Mrs. Reader, on her election as Town • Councillor for Wakefield.

* * * *

Our member, Miss V. S. Laughton, M.B.E., who was Principal at the Crystal Palace while the W.R.N.S. was stationed there, has undertaken to edit the Souvenir Journal, which the W.R.N.S. are issuing shortly.

THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.

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

MISS LEONORA de ALBERTI. MISS BARRY, Hon. Sec. MISS BRADY. MISS KATHLEEN FITZGERALD, B.A. MISS A. E. ELLIOTT. MISS GABRIELLE JEFFERY, Hon. Treasurer.

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MISS LEONORA de ALBERTI. Hon. Editor MISS BRADY Hon. Treasurer Signed articles do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Society.

EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

" It will be the duty of the New Government to remove all existing inequalities of the law as between men and women." Election Manifesto signed by the Prime Minister and Mr. Bonar Law on behalf on the Coalition Government.

It is interesting to note the difference voting in the House of Lords. between the debate on the Women's Emancipation Bill, which passed its second reading the struggle through which we are emergine in the House of Commons on April 4th, and the debates on woman suffrage of a few years ago. The changed tone of itself is a weighty testimony of the value of a vote. Hon, mem- recognised that where women are able to bers displayed an almost suspicious eagerness render equal service they are entitled to the to champion the cause of women. As Captain same pay as men. The entrance of women Loseby said, in listening to the chorus of into industry had been the cause of many reapproval, he could not help remembering that forms which will make the work of men and the fact that there are such things as women women much pleasanter in the coming days. in one's constituency does have some weight.

Mr. Adamson, in moving the second reading, said that the introduction of the Bill by the Labour Party was simply the natural great welfare supervisor of the nation, should sequence of the party's past work and past continue the process of removing the restraints efforts on behalf of the enfranchisement of the women of the country. Later in the debate objection was made to this, members saying that the Labour Party had not the monopoly of the championship of the women's cause, other parties having given as much support to the movement, and many members of Labour Party roundly to put their own house other parties were much indebted to the support of women at the last election.

Clause I of the Bill removes the disqualification which pervents women holding civil and judicial appointments. Clause 2 amends the Representation of the People Act, 1918. placing women upon an equal footing with are to get their complete freedom, when they men, and Clause 3 removes the disgualifica- have shown gualification for entering nearly tion which prevents women from sitting and all ranks of industry. It is not a generous

Mr. Adamson said, with much truth, that had taught us the value of women and men working together in every phase of our national life. In many quarters it was freely Wherever women had entered, the human element had played a much larger part, and therefore he urged that Parliament, as the and disabilities, and enabling the women of the country, whose help was as necessary in peace as in war, to stand on an equal footing with men, so that men and women might face the new conditions together.

Various speakers who followed told the in order. Commander Bellairs, in particular said the Bill was an emasculated and emaciated affair. "Surely," he said, " it is not in mere governmental affairs or in the power of entering this House or entering the solictor's profession, or posts in the government that they

Bill to the women, and it reminds me of the same terms all round, whether in engineering stole a pig and gave the trotters to the poor." Captain Elliot, R.A.M.C., pleaded the cause of the young in a fine speech. "The argument brought against the enfranchisement of young people is that they are dangercus people to entrust with the future Government of the country. That argument is altogether wrong, and fundamentally unsound. If there is one class of people who it? have suffered from the blindness, the incompetence, and the arrogance of their elders, it is the generation between twenty and thirty vears of age in the British Islands. The young men have suffered and bled, and the young women have suffered in tears, because the white-haired and hoary antideluvians who were governing our country alike in the trade unions and in Parliament, were unable to see what lay as clearly before them as the noses on their faces. Time and again they were shy of taking decisions because they were afraid of them. Their blood ran cold. They had hot heads and cold feet."

Dr. Elliot went on to say, on behalf of the Royal Army Medical Corps, that they had been struck by the fact that Canada, Australia. and the whole British Empire granted commissions to their nurses, but these commissions were denied them by our Army Constitution. The nurses were not entitled to hold Commissions, and, still more, women doctors were not entitled. Equal pay for equal work was a good maxim, but it should carry with it equal honour for equal work; it made him ashamed of his own decorations when he realised that the nurses who had gone through bombardments in a military hospital could not get the Military Cross. He felt that if there was one class of women who were entitled above all others to the utmost honour we could bestow, it was our women doctors and nurses, especially on the Western Front.

Dr. Addison, in replying for the Government, said that the Government was prepared to support Clauses 1 and 3, but would delete Clause 2 in Committee; they could not be committed to a Franchise Bill this Session. The Government would not support the principle of equality in the professions apart from the industries. Occupations must be open on the

THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN.

monumental generosity of the person who or cotton spinning, or the professions of doctors and solicitors.

> The Government, it appears, then, will not as yet re-open the Franchise Question, but we remind our readers that Governments, whether this or another, are apt to change their minds in response to public opinion and popular pressure. In the opinion of the people, we have a foolish Franchise Bill-why not change L. de Alberti.

URGENT APPEAL FROM THE HON. TREASURER.

I make an earnest appeal to all members and friends of the C.W.S.S. to send me a donation towards the continuation of the work of the Society. In making this appeal I feel certain that members have only to realise the importance of the work which is being done with such small means, and I shall receive a most generous response.

I can only mention a few examples of the activities of the C.W.S.S. during the past year.

Foremost among these has been our share in procuring the withdrawal of the iniquitous Regulation 40D., D.O.R.A.

At the time of the General Election, members of Parliament were closesly questioned upon their attitude towards measures affecting women. Many of our members actively supported women candidates.

Catholic Members of Parliament have been urged to Support the Women's Emancipation Bill, the Bill opening the legal profession to women, the Women's Amendments to the Ministry of Health Bill and the proposal for Widow's Pensions.

We have also taken part in deputations on the subject of Penal Reform and Married Women's Income Tax, etc. Articles on several of these questions by our Editor and Press Secretary have appeared in the Catholic Press. Another important side of our work is our correspondence with Catholic Suffragists of other lands. Greetings and literature have been exchanged with America, Belgium, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Argentines and our Colonies.

(Continued on page 40).

38

With the granting of the vote the real work the reform of the Civil Code, based on the of the Society begins. Mrs. How-Martyn at a recent public meeting reminded us that women have made many promises in the past women on an equal footing with men, gives as to what they would do when they won the her possession of her property, and recognises vote. On women is now placed the responsibility of fulfilling those pledges more honourably than is often the case with those of men politicians.

The Committee of the C.W.S.S. are ready to do so to the utmost of their power, but they cannot hope to succeed without the wholeheared co-operation of every member.

Any donation, large or small, will be acknowledged by me in the "Catholic Citizen." GABRIELLE JEFFERY, Hon. Treasurer.

THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN SPAIN AND THE ARGENTINES.

Within the last few weeks we have received communications from Madrid and from the Argentine Republic announcing the formation of new feminist societies in those lands. In Spain the Unión de las Mujeres de España came into being in August 1918. Its aims are the education of Spanish women, the improvement of their economic status, and the obtaining for them of all the civil and political rights which the law concedes to men.

An eloquent leaflet issued by the new society, says that the tragedy of war, and the heroic example afforded by women of other countries have awakened dormant energies in the souls of Spanish women. The war has proved the error made by men in not reckoning women among the peoples. In the pursuit of business and of wealth, the spiritual side has been lost sight of, and half the human race has been forgotten. The new Society appeals to all women, the high born lady and the simple worker, to unite together in working for the uplifting of women, in the spirit of true Christian brotherhood.

We hear also of the foundation of another Suffrage Society in Spain, of which we hope resolution, seconded by Mrs. Anderson, was to obtain further details.

society founded a few months ago, called the Union Femenista Nacional.

pation of woman. The immediate object is with dependent children."

Napoleonic Code. Senator Iberlucea has brought before the Senate a law which places her right as administrator.

We wish our colleagues in Spain and in the Argentines speedy success in their good work.

WIDOW'S PENSIONS.

A Meeting of the C.W.S.S. was held on April 15th, at 144, High Holborn, when Miss Leadly Browne, M.B.E., spoke on the proposed scheme of pensions for the widows of civilians. The Chair was taken by Miss Kathleen Fitzgerald, B.A. Miss Browne dealt on the pitiless lot of the widow left without means to provide for her family. Many of these women had been the wives of skilled work men, and were compelled, through no fault of their own, to sink lower and lower in the social scale. Their children were habitually underfed, and the boys, instead of following the skilled trades of their fathers, swelled th ranks of the unskilled, as their mothers were compelled to put them to work as early as possible as van boys or errand boys. If the niggardly treatment of these women had had disastrous results upon the children, it had been equally disastrous for the mother, who was overwhelmed by the double burden of taking care of her home and children, and providing for their maintenance. Judge Neil, founder of the Mothers' Pensions Scheme, which had worked so successfully in the United States, had declared that he was merely demanding horses' rights for mothers It was illegal to overwork a horse; there was no limit to the overworking of mothers. The question was not one to be left any longer to the Poor Law. Though the initial cost of Widows' Pensions would be heavy, it would prove an economy to the State, by the reduction of orphanages, and by the increased efficiency of future citizens. The following carried unanimously : " That this meeting of From Buenos Aires comes news of a new the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, believing that reconstruction must start with the welfare of children, urges the Government The Society aims at the complete emanci- to establish a system of Pensions for Widows

THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN.

"MYSTICS ALL." *

Two year ago Miss E. M. Dinnis gave us delightful volume of stories, called "God's airy Tales," and I daresay many of us have at down to enjoy " Christopher " all over gain, or even more, "A Royal Maundy," here we turn to the poor little boy with the oisoned foot, and hear him describe the isitor, priest and surgeon; "he was not oung," he said, " but he hadn't got old, he as beautiful." "He was like Jesus Christ." never forget that tale; for its simple appeal nd real exquisite beauty it cannot be surassed. " Christopher " is unique in psychic xperience, all divine.

Now we welcome a further volume, called Mystics All," which arrests the attention, all the work, both prose and poetry, of mid Dennis does. We are so glad to see Crazy Sammy," a remarkable story, which won our hearts in a magazine-it tands a little masterpiece. "Gratias" is a ouching story of a pleading for a blindless cure, being answered by the light of aith instead; a pleasing, if not a new theme. Then "The One that Followed " is a striking nstance of the author's special gift-the sychic clothing the artistic experience-with is, one may place " The Intervener," a fine tudy of the vocation-call struggling with and onquering human love, and then the victor, inding that God in His Mercy had killed the cause of the struggle-Therese had won the piritual conflict at the Calvary of the Crossoads, even when she was expecting her Jules meet her after his return from the War. The story must be read and enjoyed for the eauty of its teiling; it is a bleeding soul wrung by love. There are subtle touches and unexpected crises in all her stories, but the author is lavish in this soul-drama of the French farm.

Wearisome rather is "The Conversion of the Old Nurse," and unworthy of the collection "Mrs. Blake's Mary," for the effort for humour in the latter spoils any spontaneity of treatment. I love "The Brown Beads," reminiscent of Mgr. Benson's "Mirror of Shallot"-the character-study is good.

What strikes one so much in these two vol-

* E. M. Dinnis. Sands and Co. 4/- net.

umes is the endeavour, or rather the success, of the author in proving the nearness of the human to the divine-the mystical suffusion, as it were, of the ordinary sweet and sordid by the halo of the Divine Presence-the immanence and the transcendance-it is quite distinct, in her case, from the modern Eastern cult, for these pages are full of the Real, the Blessed Sacrament, the Mass.

You remember the little white Pyx bag swinging over the sick boy in "Royal Maundy?" You remember what Dick said on seeing the Monstrance, with Crazy Sammy, at Benediction; "but the clock's got no hands?" Telling Eternity-not time.

The spiritual, mystical influence of the work brings evidence of the inability to separate this world and the next. A. E. has some lovely lines which will illustrate my meaning better than any essay of mine :

"You remember, dear, together Two children, you and I Sat once in the autumn weather Watching the autumn sky.

There was someone round us straying The whole of the long day through, Who seemed to say, "I am playing At hide and seek with you."

.

But God like a wind goes breathing A dream of Himself in all." EDITH PEARSON.

LONDON AND BRANCH NEWS

55, Berners Street, W.I. Office hours, 3-30 to 5-30. Saturdays, 10-30 to 12-30. Other times by Appointment.

We report in another column the meeting in support of Widows Pensions, held on April 15th, and the meeting in support of Lord Buckmaster's Bill, held on April 5th.

Resolutions in support of these reforms have been sent by the C.W.S.S. to all the Catholic M.P.s and to the Ministers concerned.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH.

The Branch is supporting the meeting on Widows' Pensions, which will be held at Picton Hall, on Friday, 16th May, at 8 p.m. Speakers, Judge Neil, and Councillor Eleanor Rathbone. The Chair will be taken by Canon Harford, M.A.

40

41

THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.

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OBJECT.

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