

THE

Catholic Citizen

Organ of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, (formerly Catholic Women's Suffrage Society), 55 Berners Street, London, W. 1.

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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.

Housing

BY COUNCILLOR MRS. C. J. MATHEW, J.P.

As far back as 1926 I moved a supplementary estimate to the effect that the London County Council should obtain powers to build for all, instead of the present position which is that we can only build for persons of the "working class."

My object was that if the supplemental estimate went through (it didn't), we could build for the other class, securing the profits that private enterprise gets now, and giving housing of better quality and a larger type, at lower rents to "persons of the working class."

Incidentally, too, it would have afforded an opportunity of re-modelling and re-planning London.

It was not passed—it was too "socialistic"—but the need to have some such powers is still with us, while the housing of the poorer people which is proceeding under the Socialist County Council with greater speed and on better lines than under the Municipal Reform majority goes on.

Certainly the next thing to do—(without the powers I then asked for, it will have to go on the rates)—will be to make more provision for the family.

I am aware that technically a "family" can be an individual living alone, but to me, a family is a father, mother and children, and the technical "family" is just an individual, and by no means a family.

The Labour or Socialist Council has put up the percentage of the larger accommodation by 10 per cent. but I want more than that. The four roomed flat is the least I should build for young families—the old people can get accommodation where the young family can't. The young family has too often to be brought up in the worst accommodation—it is the way

the slum landlord makes his profits. The rents he charges are generally far higher than the Council's and for these rents there are no amenities. No water—above the ground floor, one water closet—in the yard, and perhaps as many as thirty-five to this one convenience.

The houses that the working classes are living in, owned by private enterprise, were built originally for one family. In the poorer London districts, there is quite often two families in four rooms—the taller houses have quite often in them a family with two rooms, one at the top, and one on the ground floor! I know of 6, 7 and 8 in one room. I know of three generations, equalling 13, in 3 rooms, rooms which are part of a house built for one family only.

In the census of 1921-1931 it was discovered that London is in a category by itself with regard to what is described as "sharing" families. Nearly two-thirds of the families in London are "sharing" families, whilst more than one half (54.9 per cent.) of the sharing families of England and Wales are in the Greater-London area. The ratio of overcrowding in London (13.1 per cent.) is much higher than in Outer-London (5.3 per cent.) and than in England and Wales (6.9 per cent.).

On the basis of the Government's Housing Bill, 1935, 39,000 additional tenements will be required to provide that less than two persons shall live to, or in, a room. We spend a vast sum each year curing the effects of bad housing and over-crowding, and we are making good progress with housing, but "while the grass grows the horse starves" and it is not only one generation that has been effected by London's housing condition but four or five generations are involved in this evil.

Tuberculosis is a "house" disease, so is rheumatism. Overcrowding explains the first—the second is largely caused by washing having to be dried in the living room.

There is a certain awakening of the public conscience now, and local authorities in London are mostly making some contribution to new and better housing, but far the largest provider is the London County Council.

There are large estates outside the County where excellent accommodation is provided. The rents are lower than the slum rents, and the amenities are well done: all houses have bath rooms with washing and drying convenience. (I want the rooms larger—the walls of a small room get more wear and tear than those of a large room, and maintenance is some consideration, as well as capital.) There are gardens to all houses, and many of them are well cared for. But the drawback is that these estates are far from the place of employment and that the cost of transport with rent, makes them impossible for the older families. The young family with only the father at work can manage, and some men bicycle many miles to work to save the fares. (The average age of the population of Becontree is 23 years.) The older families cannot do this, and when the boys and girls go to work one cannot get them to move out of over-crowded rooms, not because of the rents alone, but of the rents plus fares.

I know one family that had to move back into London because when the children got to the earning age they had to expend 35/- per week, "before" they could "buy bread." Therefore we want larger lettings in central areas where the family will not have to pay so much for transport, or we must induce industry to go out.

In Stepney a number of houses in quiet squares, conveniently situated for work are lost for housing because industry has taken them and turned them into factories and rooms—the best in the house—are taken for workshops—and this when there are empty factories!

I wish some Catholic association as other denominations have already done would form a public utility society and build experimentally for families. I want elastic structures to be capable of expansion or diminishing so that rooms could be increased or merged as wanted. No, this is not an idle dream, it can be done by the use of steel and thoughtful planning as to windows. It is not unduly expensive, and is not so costly as overcrowding and ill-health.

The reason I used the word "experiment-

ally" is not because of the unusual nature of the fabric, but because this society could try out having one central kitchen for tenants—also a reading and writing room, such as are now in use at public libraries, where children could do homework, or read in peace. (I know the tenants would want selecting, but the experiment would be interesting.)

I want families given the advantage of such an experiment, even if it might fail.

If it does fail, the structure is still there.

I am saddened by the present position where the children are at the mercy of the private enterprise slum landlord, with the worst conditions and the highest rents. There should be nurseries and/or play rooms and a laundry—with a garden-playground for this little community of families. Consideration for the young is every bit as much a virtue as consideration for the old.

The streets are roadways for traffic—and not play places for children.

I don't want children frightened of the streets, but there is a difference between training them for the streets and having no other place for them to play in.

Then I need not dwell on the evil of maternal mortality and morbidity. Would not this experiment make some difference to the figure of maternal mortality? I think so. Not to have to drag water—to have easier work—means less strain on the mother both before and after confinement, and her recovery would be quicker and more permanent, because we had made living less strenuous.

It would be a chivalrous social gesture and I know we are capable of that.

ANNA MATHEW



**Help your
own Hospital!**

The
Hospital of St. John & St. Elizabeth

60 Grove End Road, N.W.8

DHB

Notes and Comments

On July 23rd Mrs. Tate presented to the House of Commons a Petition asking that legal effect should be given to the declaration of the British Government in 1931 at Geneva, that all disabilities of married women in matters of nationality should be removed. The Petition was signed by 136 women, representing 100 women's societies in New Zealand, Australia, Canada, South Africa, Bermuda and Ceylon. It stated that four of the Dominions had shown that they were willing to adopt legislation giving a woman married or unmarried the right to enjoy independent nationality and the same right as a man to retain or change it, but until British legislation embodied this reform there was small chance of its being adopted by the Dominions.

Several members of St. Joan's Alliance were in the House during the presentation of the Petition, among them Miss Flynn of Melbourne.

We are delighted that henceforward the London County Council will not dismiss women teachers and doctors from its service, on marriage. The resolution proposed for the removal of the marriage bar was carried by 76 votes against 37, with certain reservations affecting women doctors in full-time or residential posts.

Readers will remember that St. Joan's Alliance was represented last year on a deputation organised by the Open Door Council, to the General Purposes Committee of the L.C.C., to ask that they would reconsider their policy of not employing married women. The chairman of the General Purposes Committee, Miss Agnes Dawson, is to be congratulated on the able way in which she piloted the resolution.

We hope that the precedent set by the London County Council will be followed by County Councils and local governing bodies throughout the country.

The Minister of Health introduced on the Report stage of the National Health Insurance Bill an amendment, the effect of which will be to ensure that wives of insured persons shall not lose maternity benefit as a result of the husband's unemployment. That the amendment was carried was largely owing to the efforts of our co-religionist, Mr. J. J. Tinker, who had support from all sides of the House.

The Society of Women Housing Estate Managers informs us that Mr. E. L. Riley, at present chief clerk in the Liverpool Corporation Veterinary Department, has been appointed to the post of Superintendent of Lettings in the Corporation's Housing Department for which Miss J. M. Thompson was rejected, as reported in our last issue. It cannot be ascertained that Mr. Riley has any experience in housing administration while Miss Thompson is a fully trained and experienced property manager. The lengths to which sex prejudice can lead otherwise sensible people are unbelievable.

We cannot but regret deeply that Lady Astor has recently declared in Parliament (July 17th), that she is in favour of "Birth Control" clinics supported out of public funds. "Many years ago," she said, "I did not believe in these clinics." As it has taken her some time to make up her mind on the subject, let us hope that she may reconsider it.

Readers are strongly advised to "listen in" on September 22nd at 5 p.m. when Miss Mabel Shaw, O.B.E., of the London Missionary Society will broadcast on her work among African women and girls.

Miss Shaw founded a Girls' School at Mbereshi, Northern Rhodesia, which is planned and run on the lines of an African village. She describes this most interesting educational experiment in her delightful book, "God's Candlelights."

Recently members of St. Joan's Alliance had the privilege of hearing Miss Shaw speak at one of the British Commonwealth League luncheons.

The *Catholic Citizen* is to take part in the Catholic Press Exhibition to be held in the Vatican City from April to October, 1936. At the inaugural meeting of the Committee formed under the auspices of the C.T.S., to deal with matters pertaining to the national exhibit it was arranged that, in addition to the entry fee of £1 13s. 0d., a donation of not less than £5 should be invited from each periodical taking part in the exhibition. Those who have the welfare of the *Catholic Citizen* at heart might like to contribute something to our donation.

(Continued on page 71)

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE,

AND

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

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MISS CHRISTINE SPENDER, *Hon. Editor.*

African Women

To the Report* of the second Session of the League of Nations Advisory Committee of Experts on Slavery held in Geneva in April, is appended a valuable document (Appendix 15) relating to the status of African women. The document in question contains the replies to the following extract from a Despatch, dated March 8th, 1930, from the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Officers administering the Governments of Kenya, Uganda Protectorate, Tanganyika Territory, Nyasaland, Northern Rhodesia and Zanzibar:

It has further been represented to me that the status of native women is in some places scarcely distinguishable from that of slavery, and I shall be glad to receive your observations on this question in particular, and in general on the status and conditions of life of native women . . .

The Despatch followed close on the heels of a deputation organised by the Council for Representation of Women on the League of Nations, urging the Secretary of State for the Colonies to include the domestic slavery of women in the terms of reference of any Commission set up to consider the question of slavery.

All the replies deny that the status of the women in the various territories concerned is scarcely distinguishable from that of slavery, but unfortunately a sentence here and there betrays that things are not so satisfactory from the women's point of view as many of the writers would have us believe.

"Marriage is by purchase and female children are welcome as marketable commodities," writes the Commissioner of the Central Province, Sierra Leone, after having complacently asserted that "the status of women in this colony presents nothing that is alarming." Mr. Anderson, Provincial Commissioner, Nyasa-

* C. 159, M. 113, 1935, VI.

land, admits that the life of native women "generally is one of drudgery and the sex is regarded as inferior to that of the male." The Governor of Tanganyika quotes the native court records of Tanganyika as "conclusive proof" that women's rights are "numerous and real." One of his examples is rather unfortunate:

Suits by women against their husbands for divorce on the grounds of cruelty, failure to provide them with food and clothing, desertion and so on, are common.

The Director of Medical and Sanitary Services, Zanzibar, writes:

It is among them (the women) that prejudice, suspicion, ignorance and superstition persist in their worst forms and they, far more than the men, are responsible for refusing to call in medical assistance and for resorting to spells or incantations in cases of difficult labour and serious illness.

Never a word on the necessity of female education. The Governor of Kenya is wiser:

If the innate conservatism of native women is to be overcome, the attack on the problem must be by means of education concurrently with the improvement of their economic and social conditions.

He asserts that "among the bulk of the natives that have been under our control, an improvement in the status of women has occurred," thereby admitting that all was not perfect in the first instance. The Governor of Tanganyika is so convinced that "everything in the garden is fair" that he goes as far as to uphold polygamy, though the Commissioner of Sierra Leone is concerned by the tendency of rich old men to buy up all the available wives in his district.

The women of the Gold Coast seem to fare best:

As to the status of women in the Gold Coast, they are far from occupying a position of slavery, but on the contrary, enjoy complete equality with men in every respect. They are not coerced into

marriage, and, when married, may trade independently of their husbands and have their separate estates. Their liberty of movement is in no way restricted. Descent among the Akan tribes being matrilineal, the female members of the "stool" families exercise a considerable influence in State affairs and have in many instances been elected as chiefs of important divisions. (Officer administering the Government of the Gold Coast.)

The Governor of Nigeria writes of polygamy:

Nor does it appear that the system, *except amongst the Christian educated classes in the south*, is distasteful to the women, for it is commonly the wife who incites the husband to add to the number of his wives with a view to lightening her domestic burdens.

The italicised words (italics ours) unconsciously emphasise the policy of St. Joan's Alliance. There is a happiness which is not worthy of the beasts of the field, there is a well-being which has little but eugenic value. By the enforcement of wise laws and by means of a Christian education St. Joan's Alliance would have the status of the African woman raised so that, keeping whatever is of value in the old way of life, she may go forward to the conception of her dignity as human being made in the image and likeness of God.

CHRISTINE SPENDER.

NOTES AND COMMENTS *Continued from page 69*

It gives us great pleasure to note from *Apostalatus Maris* that in Genoa, through the efforts of Father Desmond Chute, a women's club was established a few years ago for the benefit of stewardesses and other women employed in the ships which use the port of Genoa. The Sezione Femine Committee, the President of which is Marchesa Ventimiglia, organises the club, and members of the Committee visit the women seafarers on the ships. When this work was started it was decided by the International Apostleship of the Sea that "similar work should be started in ports where *Apostalatus Maris* organisation was strong enough and the number of women seafarers great enough to justify the effort."

Apostalatus Maris goes on to say:

Hundreds of Catholic women seafarers are to be found at all the great passenger ports. Obviously women Sea Apostolate workers are required for the task of securing contact with these women. Obviously too, special provision must be made for welcoming them on shore, and made by a woman's committee. At many of the larger *Apostalatus Maris* Institutes there are such committees, but so far, only Genoa has organised specifically for the care of women seafarers, presenting a special Report on this necessary section of *Apostalatus Maris* work.

We send the *Apostalatus Maris* Association all good wishes for their forthcoming Congress which is to be held in London at the beginning of October.

* * * *

At the International Congress for Scientific Management held recently in London it was claimed that Housekeeping is an art based on a number of underlying sciences; that housekeepers should be taught to recognise this fact; and that house work must come to be regarded as a most important industry. It was suggested that panels of housewives to deal with questions arising in their work might be formed. Dr. Lilian Gilbreth, the expert in scientific management, fatigue and motion study in U.S.A., read a paper on motion study. Dr. Gilbreth thinks that women's chief difficulty in improving their conditions of work is to make the manufacturers realise how archaic household equipment is and to make architects realise how *not* to plan a house. She has five daughters, six sons and three grandsons so considers she "ought to know what she is talking about." Another American delegate to the Conference urged that public opinion should be roused to better the conditions of housewives and domestic servants in kitchens.

Too often housewifery is regarded as the Cinderella of callings and this is especially to be deplored when unemployment is forcing many women to take refuge in domestic service. *The Catholic Herald* recently gave publicity to a letter written by a French cook which shows how few rights domestic servants have and how much they can suffer when employers choose to abuse their power over them—"yet we are working women as deserving of interest as the others"—writes the cook.

When will the reformer arise who has the courage to declare the dignity of the domesticities and who, as a natural corollary, will undertake to better the lot of the domestic servant?

* * * *

On July 17th through the kindness of Miss D. J. Collier, F.R.C.S., a Sherry Party was given under the auspices of St. Joan's Alliance, at her house in St. John's Wood when Mrs. Laughton Mathews gave a most interesting account of the gathering at Istanbul.

On July 21st through the kindness of Miss Fedden an At Home was given at her house in Hampstead to meet a distinguished member of the Alliance, Miss Flynn of Melbourne, who spoke on the position of women in Australia.

Marriage Customs in Kenya

In the *Manchester Guardian* of August 24th there appeared a very illuminating letter from Archdeacon Owen of Kavirondo. We reprint extracts from the letter and take this opportunity of offering our grateful thanks to the Archdeacon for his bold championship of the women of Kenya:

... As my car ran on to the bridge I saw a woman, running, who had been approaching it, swerve quickly and make for the steep bank leading to the water. Pursuing her was a man flourishing a vicious-looking whip, short in stock, with a long, heavy thong. Noticing that the native passers-by stopped walking abruptly and were gazing down the bank, I braked hard, got out, and walked the few yards to where I could see down to the river.

The woman was lying on the slope by the water's edge, panting, distressed. Over her stood the man, administering a flogging. I called out angrily and demanded that he come to me. He hesitated, yielded to my insistence, and came. Now for the whip, which with even more reluctance he handed to me. Then I called to the woman to come. She came, suspicious, a hunted thing, ill-favoured as to looks, but younger than the villainous-visaged man. "What relation are you to the woman?" "I call her Mama, my mother, for she is one of my father's wives, though not my mother." "Why are you flogging your father's wife?" "I was flogging her because she ran away from my father. She has given us a lot of trouble and is always running away."

Under certain circumstances native marriage customs seem to involve a kind of slavery for reluctant women. Forced into a relationship against which she protests in vain, bound by the ten or fifteen head of cattle which her family receive from the suitor, the common remedy these women seek is flight. I happened to come upon a flight which failed. The broad weals across her arms and legs bore eloquent testimony to the failure.

Last week a car rolled up to my door, and from it descended a European and his wife, a native with a long line of medal ribbon on his coat, and a tall young Luo woman. The native was the employee of the European, very much older than the girl, and a polygamist. Marriage by capture still exists in Kavirondo, and in accordance with this custom, by consent of the father, he had captured (forcibly) the girl. She ran away, whereupon a few days before I saw them, he had appealed to the native tribunal and been confirmed in his right to the girl. He forcibly haled her away, but three times in two days she had escaped, only to be caught and dragged back. Finally he attempted witchcraft by fastening upon her wrist a heavy bracelet of twisted iron, supposed to carry a potent charm in which both the man and the girl believed. Her cries had so aroused the European and his wife that they sought some way out of the situation. The girl's story, told with emotion, was that she had always protested, from the very first, that she would not be forced into marriage with the man. She would die rather than submit to have the "charmed" wristlet fastened upon her. I talked to the polygamist. I reminded him that the King's Courts (not the native tribun-

als) would not stand for forcible bewitchment, that he had better let her go. After some talk he agreed to release her, and departed, leaving her in my office. She showed me her weals. On the neck they were particularly eloquent. Also, she told me that she was about to become the mother of the child of the man she loved...

I think that there exists somewhere in England an organisation whose aim is "to secure equality of liberties, status, and opportunities between men and women in the British Commonwealth of Nations." Natives of Kenya Colony are British subjects, the women as well as the men. For a good many years some of us, natives as well as non-natives, have been urging that all marriages should be required to be registered, so that native girls should not have to submit to those elements of native marriage which are scarcely distinguishable from slavery (with forced cohabitation). We have failed locally. Friends in England can succeed where we have failed.

This letter was followed up by letters from several feminist organisations, including St. Joan's Alliance.

Reviews

The Skirts of Time. By Winifred Peck. (Faber & Faber, 7s. 6d.)

This story follows the fortunes of the four Gorne sisters who, growing up in mid-Victorian times, are on the threshold of life impelled to join the "Petticoat Rebellion" as a protest against their upbringing by a bigoted and tyrannical father. The reactions of the sisters, according to their different natures, to the new movement for women's emancipation make deeply interesting reading: and, in sketching the history of the movement in this country down to the granting of the vote, the author displays an intimate knowledge of her subject. At times, in her apparent desire to do justice to the opposite point of view, she holds the scales so evenly, revealing so many glimpses—to quote her words—of "the inner foe to freedom in the heart of every woman," that one is tempted to doubt upon which side her real sympathy lies. This characteristic should make the book appeal even to opponents of the feminist movement.

Here and there one comes across antipathetic allusions to the Catholic Religion, or things Catholic and wonders why they appear, so extraneous are they to the subject matter of the story. One can only surmise that the author is interested in Catholicism and, in spite of herself, finds in it a certain attraction. The book ends with a moving account of the victory of Josephine Butler in 1883, against the

Maternal Mortality

A Conference called by the Maternal Mortality Committee was held on June 25th, at the Livingstone Hall, to consider the following Policy which had been drawn up by the Maternal Mortality Committee:

1. The institution in each area of a maternity service which, while paying attention to the varying needs and character of different localities, shall enable all women to obtain adequate ante-natal, natal and post-natal care. To this end special attention shall be paid to the following points:
 - (a) Ante-natal, natal and post-natal care should be under the same medical guidance.
 - (b) Midwifery practice should be limited to doctors with post-graduate training and practice in Obstetrics.
 - (c) Local schemes should be encouraged which would enable private practitioners so equipped to take part in the maternity services.
 - (d) The need of skilled obstetricians for all complicated cases.
 - (e) The extension of the period of midwives' training to two years.
 - (f) The advantage of a service of salaried midwives working under the direction of a Hospital, a Nursing Association or the Local Authority.
 - (g) The provision of a sufficiency of maternity beds, in properly equipped hospitals, for complicated cases and for patients whose condition or home circumstances entail potential risk.
 - (h) An improved domiciliary service for women attended by a doctor or midwife; such service to provide trained maternity nursing.
 - (i) An adequate after-care service which is seldom, if at all, provided in Maternity and Child Welfare schemes. Its object should be to ensure that the period of hospital and domiciliary care is sufficient for the mother's full restoration to health, and that the infant's early hold on life is secure. To this end the whole of the arrangements for the care of mother and baby should everywhere be the responsibility of one and the same Public Health Authority.
2. Since we have not yet succeeded in applying effectively existing knowledge to the reduction either of maternal morbidity and mortality, or of the high death rate of new-born infants, it is desirable that there should be established carefully planned model schemes in selected urban and rural districts. As part of the work thus undertaken, or as a separate task, an investigation is urgently needed of the extent to which childbirth is followed by disability.

A special grant from public funds should be available for the encouragement of such schemes.
3. Compulsory immediate, confidential notification to the M.O.H. of the Local Supervising Authority of all deaths occurring during pregnancy, and of all those following or associated with childbirth and abortion.

G.V.J.

The Catholic Woman's Outlook. (Catholic Women's League, 1s.)

This new Annual is an experiment which should be encouraged. Its aim is "to take stock of the whole Catholic laywomen's effort" once a year, and the editor, Miss Margaret Fletcher, begs readers to interest themselves in the sale of this first number "and so ensure that it is not also the last." An amazing amount of information has been brought together from many quarters and our Alliance was privileged to contribute an article entitled "Women and Legislation."

We have, however, two grumbles. In the first place why were not the "two simple questionnaires" referred to in the editorial circulated to St. Joan's Alliance? We should not have "laid aside" or "forgotten" them and we are in a peculiarly good position to contribute some of the information required. Secondly, there is a reference to "feminist propaganda," also in the editorial, which saddles that propaganda with "sinful" and "anti-social" teaching. Now, we all know that certain organisations of women have advocated various immoral measures—but it has never been part of feminism *as such* to advocate these measures, and if the question is further examined it will be discovered that the organisations concerned are anything but exclusively feminist. Perhaps these two criticisms will be remembered for the next time.

We wish the Annual good luck and long life.

C.S.

Readers should not miss the concert to be given by Norah Drewett (Mme de Kresz), in aid of our funds, on September 26th. Mme de Kresz will only be in London a few days before returning to Hungary. Particulars of the concert will be found on page 76.

International Notes

We are glad to welcome *A Candéia*, the organ of a new association of Catholic women in **Brazil** founded by Maria Herminia Lisboa, whom we had the pleasure of welcoming at the Office many years ago, and who is a member of our Alliance. We hope to give further information of this association in a future issue.

* * * *

Le Droit de Femmes (Paris) reports that in **Spain** *La Gazeta de Madrid*, the official journal, has published a decree issued by the Ministers of Labour, of Health and of Public Welfare, dealing with venereal disease. The first article suppresses State Regulation of Vice, "prostitution no longer being recognised in Spain as a legitimate means of livelihood." If this report is correct it is indeed a triumph for abolitionists.

* * * *

We understand that in **Argentina** a decree of May 16th, under Act No. II, 317, Section 8, prohibits the employment of women in the driving and care of cattle and in work in hospitals intended exclusively for infectious and contagious diseases. This decree is an eye-opener as to the absurdities to which "protective legislation" can lead.

* * * *

Le Féminisme Chrétien (Brussels), reports that the new Belgian Government has withdrawn two decrees which reduced the salaries of women teachers and civil servants below that of men doing the same work. Unfortunately other deplorable decrees which discriminate against women's work still remain, and Catholic feminists have taken part in a deputation, which included women of all shades of opinion, urging the withdrawal of these decrees.

* * * *

Bombay women, by lobbying members of the Bombay Legislative Council have been successful in procuring the withdrawal of the Bill to restrict the right to adoption by Hindu widows. This incident shows the strength of the organised women of India.

* * * *

In a note in last month's issue describing the Petition sent to H.M. the King by the Canadian Alliance for Women's Votes of Quebec we stated that Mme Fremont was President of the Alliance. We are informed that Mlle Idola St. Jean, the founder of the Society, is the President and that it was she who took the initiative in organising the Petition.

From *Le Mouvement Féministe* (Geneva), we learn that at the Delegates' Meeting of the Swiss Society of Commerce, held at Lausanne last May, M. W. Syz (Zurich), proposed that vacancies occurring in commerce, industry and in banks should be reserved by a "numerus clausus" to married men or men of an age to marry. The Central Committee opposed this proposition and ultimately it was rejected by the Meeting.

Le Mouvement Féministe notes with satisfaction "this new proof of feminism or rather of respect for the right to work" which the Swiss Society of Commerce has given.

* * * *

We take the following from a recent issue of the *Commonweal* (U.S.A.):

At the 188th annual commencement exercises of Princeton University, which despite intermittent showers, were held in the open air in front of historic Nassau Hall, June 18th, Agnes Repplier was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters. This is the second time in the university's history that a woman has received a Princeton degree, the first occasion being the awarding of a degree to Willa Cather in 1931. In conferring this degree on Miss Repplier, Dean Eisenhart spoke as follows: "Agnes Repplier, dean of American essayists, sympathetic annalist of her native city, Philadelphia; faithful biographer of Père Marquette and Mère Marie of the Ursulines. American literature has been permanently enriched by her Gallic gaiety, her kindly humour, her keen thrusts of satire, trenchant but without venom, her good taste and innate sense for the amenities of life and letters, her rich store of reading, her anchorage in ancient loyalties of faith. Not indifferent to counter-currents and points of friction in the world of to-day, she has been able to forget 'the vexations and humiliations of the present in a serene study of the mighty past.'" S.A.B.

OBITUARY

By the death of Dr. Margaret Morice the Alliance has lost one of its earliest and most faithful members. Year by year Dr. Morice sent contributions to our Christmas Sale and with her gifts came a letter of appreciation for our work. Dr. Morice was among the first seven women medical students in England. She also studied in Vienna and finally took her M.D. in Brussels. Dr. Morice was under Dr. Annie McCall in the Maternity Hospital, Clapham, and later she had a post in the G.P.O. where her duty was to attend to the health of the women clerks. "A more absolutely unselfish woman never lived," writes one who knew her well.

We ask the prayers of our readers for the repose of the soul of the above, and also for the repose of the souls of Mr. A. F. Roper, husband of our member Mrs. Roper, and of our member Miss F. A. Murphy of Lowell (U.S.A.), both of whom died recently. R.I.P.

Government of India Act

INDIAN WOMEN'S ATTITUDE

From the All India Women's Conference we have received a statement issued by their standing Committee at Poona on July 28th, "on the present position of women in the new Constitution and the attitude of the organised women of India thereto."

We quote in full their causes of complaint as embodied in the Memorandum:

(a) In the clause dealing with Fundamental Rights the Sex disqualification has not been entirely removed—a small concession only in regard to women's eligibility for entrance into the Civil Service having been conceded.

(b) While appreciating the fact that a door has been left open for modifying the communal award we deeply resent that we are being forced into the communal arena against our wishes strongly set forth from the very beginning.

(c) We are glad to note that the Literacy qualification has now been extended to all the Provinces excepting two—but we sincerely hope that Assam and the N.W.F.P. and any new provinces that may come into existence will be similarly treated.

(d) We feel very strongly that we are still to be hampered by the application conditions which are bound to reflect adversely on our voting numbers.

(e) We once more wish to record our deep indignation at the wifehood qualification which has been imposed on us in spite of repeated protests.

(f) We maintain that our alternative proposal for adult suffrage in urban areas has been turned down without sufficient effort having been made to understand the outstanding advantages.

(g) We confess our inability to understand the utter inconsistency of a measure which provides the ridiculous situation of direct election to the Upper and indirect to the Lower Houses of the Federal Legislature. We still adhere to our firm belief in methods of direct election.

(h) While we have always been against reservation of seats we realise that owing to the qualifications laid down in the new Constitution, it is the only way open to us to enter the Upper Federal House. We do, however, urge that the methods of election to the six seats reserved for us may be in consonance with our principles.

The All India Women's Conference are pressing that election to the seats reserved for women in the Provincial and Central legislatures shall be through a joint electorate of men and women with no reference to communal parties. They beg the organised women in England to help them in pressing for this method of election, which they feel has only to be tried to succeed and which would do much to break up communalism and the system of communal grouping. The Standing Committee have decided that members of the Conference all over India shall withhold women from applying to be enrolled as voters even in the case of those eligible to vote through the liter-

acy qualification, until this point has been settled.

The wifehood qualification is so distasteful to the All India Women's Conference that they feel they must refrain entirely from availing themselves of it and will never ask "wife" voters either to enrol themselves or to vote.

St. Joan's Alliance will press for a system of joint electorates, as requested by the All India Women's Conference.

HON. TREASURER'S NOTE

We must again beg for annual subscriptions to be sent in. Some eighty of our members have not yet paid for 1935 and we hereby implore them to do so as soon as possible. (Minimum annual subscription to the Alliance is; *Catholic Citizen* 2s. 6d.)

The office rent falls due this month and so far we have not the amount in hand with which to pay it, so any donations for this purpose would be warmly welcomed.

Also please remember that the barrow sales have started again and send us all the unwanted articles you can.

P. M. BRANDT.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS July 1st to September 1st

	£	s.	d.
Bain, Miss	2 0 0
Collier, per Miss D. J.; F.R.C.S.	11 7
Douglas Irvine, Miss H.	12 0
Duchemin, Rt. Rev. Mgr.	2 6
Fedden, per Miss	1 2 8
Fortey, Councillor, Miss J. P.	2 6
Gray, Miss E.	2 6
Keogh, Miss	2 6
McEntee, Miss	3 11
McFie, Miss Agnes	2 6
Quinlan, Miss Agnes	1 1 0
Spender, Miss C.	5 5 9
Street, Mrs. Jessie	15 0
Union of Catholic Mothers (St. Edmund's and St. Frideswide's, Oxford)	10 0
Veale, Miss	4 0
Whittles, Mrs. W.	2 6
Minimum Annual Subscriptions	11 0

Total £13 11 11

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH

Hon. Sec.: Mrs. A. Stewart Mason, B.A., "Brinsworth," Grosvenor Road, Birkenhead

The Branch held its Annual Garden Meeting on August 24th at 66 Park Road South, by kind invitation of Miss Barry. We had a very pleasant afternoon and enjoyed meeting Miss F. Barry and Miss Spender from London, Miss McCurdy from Egypt and Miss Parnell from Manchester. Miss Barry gave an informal account of Istanbul which much interested us all. Over 30s. was made for the Branch.

During September, October and November we hope to hold meetings at which members of the Conservative, Labour and Liberal parties will state their policy. We hope, in view of the forthcoming general election next year that members will make a special effort to support these meetings.

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