

THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN

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

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May 15th, 1920.

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“ST. JOAN OF ARC, PRAY FOR US”

SAINT JOAN OF ARC.

By LEONORA DE ALBERTI.

Nearly five hundred years have passed since that day in Spring when a great crowd, some exultant, some pitiful, gathered in the market place of Rouen to witness the martyrdom of the young shepherdess of Domremy. To-day vast crowds have gathered in Rome to witness the last chapter in a drama which has stirred, and still stirs the hearts of men, as though it had happened but yesterday. The long-wished for day that is to see the canonization of Joan of Arc has dawned at last. It is a great day for France, a great day for the Catholic world, and it will bring joy to many outside the fold. For the peasant girl who saved her country has become a world possession; innumerable books have been written round her, from the point of view of religion, from the point of view of history, even from a military point of view. Each one comes to the task eager to throw some new light on the strange child, whose story is unique in the annals of the human race. Like her Divine Master she was born of humble parents in an obscure village, and led to all appearance an uneventful life, though she was but thirteen when she first heard the Voices, which were to guide her on her wonderful adventure. Like Our Lord she had a short public career, and like Him again ended her life in seeming ignominy and shame on a gibbet, betrayed by her friends into the hands of her enemies, and left to die. The scoffer has endeavoured to find an explanation which shall expose her as a dupe or a charlatan—she was but a mascot, the tool of priests, a visionary—and still the simplicity

of her character, the beauty of her life, her marvellous achievements have put the scoffer to flight, and the shame he sought to bring upon her has fallen on himself. There is but one way of understanding her story, and that is by accepting the explanation which came from the lips of the Holy Maid herself. She was sent by God to save the fair realm of France, and that she came from God events have proved. Time cannot mar the freshness of the wonderful tale. She comes before our reverent vision a slim, young girl, who shrank from the sight of blood, yet dauntlessly led the armies of France to victory. Pure she passed unscathed among the lewd soldiery; compassionate even to her enemies, there was no room for hatred of them in her generous heart. She has been called the patron saint of patriotism, and in her patriotism the desecrated word may be reconsecrated. In an age which decries miracles, she challenges a puzzled world, herself an unanswerable miracle. When standing before her treacherous judges, their learning baffled by an unlettered girl, Joan appealed to the Pope she would abide by his decision, and though the trial for her rehabilitation was but twenty-five years after her martyrdom, it is to-day that Rome gives her final answer—Saint Joan of Arc. Surely her long delayed triumph has come at a time when the lessons of her life may be most appreciated. It was a wise inspiration which led the founders of our Society to choose the valiant maid as their patron—in victory and in failure, in sunshine and in gloom, may she cheer us on our thorny way and intercede for us with God.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

We hope as many of our members as possible will be at Westminster Cathedral on Sunday, May 16th, for the celebrations in honour of St. Joan of Arc. The procession will start at 5 p.m. A contingent from the C.W.S.S. will take part, walking behind our own banner of St. Joan of Arc, and wearing out colours. Father Bampton, S.J., will preach at the Outdoor Service, and Father James Goggin in the Cathedral.

* * * *

Members are asked to pray for the repose of the soul of our member, Miss Mabel Brady, who died recently.—R.I.P.

* * * *

The Labour Party's Franchise Bill, which would have reduced the voting age of women to 21 has been shelved by the Standing Committee. Presumably the latter really felt that there was no chance of the Government granting facilities, and did not wish to waste their time. Nevertheless it was the duty of the supporters of the Bill to be present, as Mr. Bonar Law said, and prevent Sir Frederick Banbury's motion from being carried. But it was Mr. Bonar Law himself and the Prime Minister who gave a pledge to women that the Coalition Government would remove all inequalities existing by law between men and women, and it is they who are responsible to women for redeeming that pledge. Why have they not redeemed it?

* * * *

Since the above was written the Chairman has summoned the Committee to meet again in response to the protest of Labour members, who declared the adjournment to be out of order.

* * * *

We are glad to see that the House of Commons, which unlike the House of Lords, is answerable to the electors, has defeated the easy divorce proposals. We firmly believe that the majority of our countrymen would agree with Mr. Ronald MacNeill's amendment which was to the effect "that while it is desirable to place the sexes on a footing of equality in regard to divorce, any change in the law that would impair the permanence of

the marriage contract would be harmful to the best interests of the community." Lady Astor, who knows that easy divorce in America has been prejudicial to the interests of women and children supported the amendment, she thinks that the world is too loose altogether, and that what we all need is tightening up. Many people will agree with her.

* * * *

We note that in replying to a letter from the Editor of this paper explaining what is involved in State regulation of vice, the Reviewer in the *Catholic Times* says "he is not concerned with the details of 'regulation,' only with the system as a fact." We are charitable enough to think that if he would concern himself with the details, he would cease to advocate the system.

* * * *

In spite of the inclement weather on the 28th April, the great procession of women employees to demand "equality of work, of pay, and of opportunity," was very successful. We sent our banner and a contingent to show our support of the principle of equality. The crowds seemed quite sympathetic, and though the waiting in Hyde Park for the procession to start was a little bleak, it was pleasantly reminiscent of pre-suffrage days. It is always amusing to listen to the awe-stricken though friendly remarks of the crowd as our banner comes in sight. *Catholic Women's Suffrage Society—they're Catholics!* varied with 'here come the suffragists!' But the remark of the afternoon came from a comfortable looking gentleman in the park, who, eyeing with marked disapproval the banners bearing the strange device "equal pay," said with emphasis "That comes from giving them any work at all!" The lady with him received the remark with a worried look, but said nothing. The procession marched to the Kingsway Hall where an enthusiastic meeting was held at which Lady Rhondda presided. The demonstration was organized by the Federation of Women Civil Servants.

THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.

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

Office: 55, BERNERS STREET, LONDON, W., 1. Tel. Museum 4181.

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OUR OWN HISTORY.

In this year and month of the triumph of our patroness St. Joan of Arc it seems only fitting that we, members of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, who placed ourselves and all our efforts under her guidance and protection, should look back over our work, consider what we have accomplished and what remains for us to do. Although nine years does not seem very long in point of actual time, yet so much has been gained for the cause of women's freedom during the past nine years that we can hardly realise that it was only in 1911 that a few pioneer Catholic women agreed to form a distinctly Catholic Suffrage Society, having the two-fold object of working for the Suffrage and of educating Catholic women in general to understand the pressing need of it.

Although the Society was started in 1911, the meetings held during that year were more or less provisional and informal; but the following year, 1912, the Inaugural Meeting was held in Kensington Town Hall and was highly successful, the Hall being crowded and the audience enthusiastic. Later on in the same year, the banner of the Society made its first public appearance at the head of a Catholic contingent which took part in a great open-air demonstration on June 17th, when the Coronation Suffrage Procession took place. During this same year several branches were formed in different provincial towns, and the general work of the Society was set going on the lines on which it has been continued up to the present time—a literature propaganda by means of pamphlets and leaflets being vigorously carried on, meetings held, and joint demonstrations taken

part in with other Suffrage Societies. The duty of keeping the press informed of our doings, of writing and answering letters in the daily and weekly papers—Catholic and non-Catholic—has always formed an important part of our educational and propaganda work. The Society is referred to very frequently by other Suffrage Societies on matters concerning the Catholic point of view on feminist questions, and is called upon to reply in the Catholic Press when attacks on suffragists and on the feminist movement in general are made by other Catholics.

The Society had not been working very long before the need for a special press organ of our own made itself felt, and in January, 1915, *The Catholic Suffragist* (now *The Catholic Citizen*) was started. It was, as was said at the time, a great act of faith in the justice of our Cause (for the war had begun and therefore a trying time for a newspaper venture), and as such it was received by the other Suffrage Societies, who gave it a cordial welcome. It has enabled us to keep the feminist point of view before our fellow Catholics, and it has been the means of bringing us into and keeping us in touch with Catholic Suffragists in many other countries.

The outbreak of war in 1914, though a great trial for us as for other Suffragists, served also to strengthen our belief in the necessity of the vote for women being gained with all speed and therefore our Society continued its propaganda, although several others abandoned theirs for the time. On every first Sunday of the month as long as the War lasted, Holy Mass was offered at St. Patrick's, Soho, at the request of our

Society, for Peace and for those killed in the War.

The year 1918 saw the granting of the Vote to women over the age of thirty, and this great victory was joyfully celebrated by the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society at a High Mass in Westminster Cathedral, on the 1st Sunday in Lent, February 18th. At the conclusion of the service, a beautiful wreath was carried in procession to the shrine of B. Joan of Arc. Our members will not easily forget this glorious Mass, when the words of the Proper for that Sunday, seemed as if chosen for the very purpose of giving us hope and encouragement in our difficult work.

Our Annual General Meeting held at this time was largely attended, and when a Resolution in favour of the continuance of the Society was put to the meeting there was not a single vote against it. The general feeling was that although the franchise had been partly won the necessity continued for us to go on working together for the uplifting of woman and the consequent uplifting of the human race. The following is the Resolution which was carried unanimously:—"That this Meeting of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society approves of the continuance of the Society with the intention of working for the further extension of the franchise to women on the same terms as it is, or may be, given to men, to establish political, social and economic equality between men and women, and to further the work and usefulness of Catholic women as citizens."

Since the passing of the Emancipation Act, our work has increased rather than diminished; the principles for which we stand are daily challenged. We still have to try to make clear to many of our co-religionists the essential Catholicity of our feminist creed. Another part of our work which has increased very greatly during the past year or two is the correspondence with Catholic Suffragists in foreign countries. Few people realize what progressive ideas regarding woman's rightful position are being held at the present day by Catholic women all over the world, and that everywhere they are banding themselves together in Societies. They meet with many difficulties, as we ourselves did, and they apply to us for advice and assist-

ance. Belgium has its Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, the Spanish women have Suffrage on their programme together with other reforms, so have the Italian women and the women of the new countries of Croatia and Slavonia. The French Society—"L'action sociale de la Femme"—has just held a Congress in Paris to discuss the Catholic feminist programme. We were invited to send a representative, and our Chairman, Miss Kathleen Fitzgerald, B.A., attended and spoke on Woman Suffrage. In the United States and in South America also the Women's Societies are very active; the leader of the Suffrage movement in Uruguay having just carried out an extensive campaign throughout that country and Argentina for the abolition of the White Slave Traffic. Our Society is sending two of our members to represent the Catholic point of view at the great women's Congress of the International Women's Suffrage Alliance which is to be held at Geneva in June.

Our work at home continues along the lines laid down by the Resolution carried at our "Victory" meeting in 1918, and is strictly non-party. Although this year finds us far advanced along the road towards political, social and economic equality, we have still a long way to travel before the end is reached.

Ours is the only Catholic Society that has for its object the attainment for women of equality in these three matters, and therefore we feel that we may confidently look for the support of every Catholic man or woman who believes in their necessity.

We echo the words of St. Joan herself "We need the soldiers to fight—God will give the Victory."

ISABEL WILLIS.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE ALLIANCE.

We call the attention of our readers to the mass meeting to be held in the Kingsway Hall, Friday May 21st, 8 p.m., to send the British Delegation to Geneva.

Viscountess Astor, Miss Maude Royden, Madame Grinberg, will be among the speakers, and Mrs. Pethick Lawrance will take the chair.

THE PARIS CONGRESS OF WOMEN WORKERS.

Under the title "Journées Sociales Féminines," a three days' Congress has just been held in Paris at which I had the honour of representing "The Catholic Women's Suffrage Society," and was invited to speak on the third day, April 25th, when the subject for discussion was "The Legal Rights of Women." The programme of the Congress was divided into three sections, a special subject being chosen for each day. First day: "The Family;" second day: "Work;" third day: "Our Country."

Admirable reports were read by the Presidents of the different organisations and by women especially invited because of their professional status.

Thus we heard La Marquise de Monstiers of the "Ligue Patriotique des Françaises," Mademoiselle Moreau, a brilliant lawyer, spoke on the dangers of present day legislation as affecting family life. We also heard Mademoiselle Duhamel, who is general Secretary of the Society of Apprentices, Madame Le Roy Liberge, President of the league known as "Patria" made a strong appeal to the French to support the products of their own country; while Mademoiselle Ponset spoke on the organisation of syndicates for women.

The Meetings were held at The Lyceum Club, 8, Rue de Penthièvre, and lasted about three hours; they were very well attended and a great number of men were present. It is noteworthy that the chairmen were not women; each day a man occupied that position and it is interesting to note their names: M. de Lamarzelle, Sénateur du Morbihan, M. Lerolle, Avocat de la Cour d'Appel, M. Souchon, Professeur à la Faculté de droit Membre de l'Institut.

For myself, I was allotted six minutes in which to tell the assembly in French, something of the position of women in the British Isles since the vote has been granted to them. The audience were extremely sympathetic and loudly applauded when I stated the need of sending Women Members to the French Chamber. When I came to the fact of our franchise law giving the vote only to the woman of thirty there was a loud murmur of dissent and in the subsequent discussion it was clearly stated that French women would

very much object to such a limit being put. As I quite expected, the President when commenting on my speech said he thought it would be most indiscreet, and not to say unkind to ask a lady her age!

An afternoon reception given the day following the Congress brought us all together by the kind invitation of Madame Chenu and the ladies of the committee at their new offices 35 Avenue Georges V. (formerly Avenue d'Alma).

The Bishop of Valence and several clergy both French and Spanish were also present and Cardinal Amette was represented.

KATHLEEN FITZGERALD.

THE GENEVA CONGRESS

At Geneva, from June 6th—12th, the International Woman Suffrage Alliance will meet once more in Congress after a lapse of seven years. Following the tremendous changes wrought by the war, the Congress will be an historic re-union, at which problems of world-wide importance will be discussed.

Delegates from almost every country in Europe, North and South America, Asia, and our Colonies will be present, while the Governments of countries which have enfranchised their women are sending official representatives. Among these Lady Astor has been appointed by the British Government and the United States will be represented by Mrs. Daniels, the wife of the Secretary to the Navy.

Catholic women must not be absent from such a gathering, they have a special message to convey.

The C.W.S.S. proposes to send two delegates, if sufficient funds are subscribed. At the present cost of travelling each delegate will need £20 to cover expenses. Of this amount, by the generosity of several members, £16 1s. od. has already been subscribed or promised, but the balance of £24 has yet to come.

The women of all the Latin countries have still to be enfranchised, and we of the C.W.S.S. believe that we may, by our presence and our testimony at the Congress do much to help and encourage these Catholic women in their fight for freedom.

Who will give towards this important work? Please send your donations to me NOW.

GABRIELLE JEFFERY.
Hon. Treasurer.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

Lady Astor has been appointed as the representative of the British Government to the International Woman's Suffrage Congress at Geneva. Miss Anna Whitlock as the representative of the Swedish Government, and Mrs. Daniels will be the official delegate of the United States. There will also be a representative from the League of Nations. Miss Maude Royden will preach in Geneva Cathedral on Sunday, June 6th.

* * * *

In the March number of *Le Feminisme Chrétien*, Mdlle. Van den Plas gives an account of the debate in the Belgian Chamber on the bill giving women of 21 the right to vote in all communal elections. The Catholics voted solidly for the reform, the Liberals with the exception of M. Hymans and M. Max against, and the Socialists were divided. One deputy twitted the Catholics on their tardy conversion, and Mdlle. Van den Plas remarks that suffragists, without ingratitude, may be allowed to regret that Catholics were not converted sooner, it has taken the party twenty-five years—and the war, to become ardent supporters of votes for women. The bill was carried by 120 to 37 votes.

* * * *

An amendment by M. Max excluding prostitutes was adopted. The Socialists voted against, not as they said from a lower appreciation of morality, but from a higher conception of justice. M. Lemonnier's amendment to repeal the article of the penal code excluding men convicted of adultery or bigamy from electoral rights, was likewise adopted. Mdlle. Van den Plas in the same number of *Le Feminisme Chrétien* has some pertinent remarks on these two amendments.

* * * *

The Hungarian Parliament has its first woman member, a school teacher, who has been returned for a Budapest division.

* * * *

We have received from Montevideo a report of the work of the Consejo Nacional de Mujeres of Uruguay, covering the period from 1916—1919. The Consejo is affiliated to the International Council of Women, and

bases its work on the principles of that society. The report does great credit to the Consejo Nacional, and shows that the various committees have covered a vast field of work in the few years the association has been in existence.

L.A.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH

Hon. Sec., Miss A. J. Musson, Fair View West, Rainhill.

There will be a meeting on June 1st, at 6 Lord St., at 7-30, when Miss L. M. Blackledge will read a paper on "Carcers."

Correspondence.

WOMAN AND THE LEAGUE.

Dear Madam,

I completely endorse your remarks in the "Catholic Citizen" of April 15th, on the social universality of the Catholic Religion. It is the great bond with other countries, and we want to spread its influence through every means at our disposal.

One great aspect of Catholicism, that of mutual love and help, is embodied in the League of Happiness through kindness, and I would like to carry on its work under the aegis of thinkers like you who understand its spirit so well.

Yours very sincerely,

Mon Caprice, JEANNE VALETTE VERNET,
54, Overcliff Road, Lewisham, S.E.13.
April 23rd, 1920.

ARE WE AFRAID OF DEMOCRACY?

Dear Madam,

The quotation on the 4th column of Miss Wall's article on Democracy is from Ruskin's "Crown of Wild Olives," not from Burke.

Yours sincerely,

New Barnet. R. BEARMAN.
April 16th.

We much regret that the Importation of Plumage (Prohibition) Bill was talked out on April 30th. The C.W.S.S. was amongst the Societies that sent up resolutions in support of it. We note that Colonel Archer-Shee was among the opponents. The Hon. Member has again been distinguishing himself. Before Sir Frederick Bantury's motion for the adjournment of the Committee, Colonel Archer-Shee had already endeavoured to kill the Franchise Bill by contending that it was out of order because it involved an expenditure of public money, but the chairman thought otherwise. The sooner the Finsbury electors return another Member of Parliament the better pleased we shall be.

International Woman Suffrage Alliance.

MASS MEETING

KINGSWAY HALL.

FRIDAY, MAY 21st, at 8 p.m.

To send off British Delegation to

The World Congress of Women

In GENEVA, June 6th to 12th, 1920.

Speakers—

Viscountess ASTOR, M.P.
Official Delegate of British Government to
Geneva Congress.

Madame SUZANNE GRINBERG,
Advocate, France.

Mrs. SARAJINI NAIDU, India.

Miss YANA SHIDACHI, Japan.

Mrs. EDWARD GAUNTLETT, Japan
Delegate to Geneva Congress.

Miss MAUDE ROYDEN.

Miss LENA ASHWELL.

Chair: Mrs. PETHICK LAWRENCE.

Tickets: Reserved and numbered, 10/., 5/., 2/6, 1/3.
Unreserved 8d. To be obtained from the Secretary,
British Geneva Congress Committee, 62, Oxford Street,
W. 1.

THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE MEETING

in the

MINERVA CAFE,

144, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C. 1.

Monday, May 17. Speaker—Miss Horniman, M.A.
Subject: "Theatrical Reminiscences." Admission
1/-. 7-30 p.m.

Thursday, June 10th. Mortimer Hall, Mortimer Street,
W. 1. Speaker—Miss Leila Lewis. Subject—
"Opportunities for Women in the Cinema World."
Chair—Miss Helena Normanton, B.A. For prices
of admission see "The Vote." 8 p.m.

THE CATHOLIC SOCIETY

appeals to

CATHOLIC WOMEN

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WEEKLY LECTURES

Wed. 12th May, 8-15 p.m. "The Peace Terms." Miss
Maude Royden. Chairman—Mr. J. Y. Kennedy

Wed. 19th May, 8-15 p.m. Lecture-Recital, "Instrumental
Form" (Violin and Piano Illustrations). Miss
Marjorie Chrystal. Miss Talbot-Phillips.

Wed. 26th May, 8-15 p.m. "Assaults on Marriage."
Dr. Marie Stopes. Chairman—Miss Nina Boyle.

Invitations to Lectures given to Non-Members on application
to the Secretary.

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THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.

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Organ—"The Catholic Citizen," 1d. monthly.

OBJECT.

To band together Catholics of both sexes, in order
to secure the political, social and economic equality
between men and women, and to further the work and
usefulness of Catholic women as citizens.

METHODS.

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

MEMBERSHIP.

All Catholic women are eligible as Members, who
approve the object and methods, and will pay a minimum
annual subscription of 1s. Men are invited to join as
Associates, on the same conditions, with the exception
that they may not elect or be elected to the Executive.

THE

INTERNATIONAL WOMAN SUFFRAGE NEWS

The Monthly Organ of

THE INTERNATIONAL WOMAN SUFFRAGE ALLIANCE.

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par

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