

THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN

WOMEN'S SERVICE
CLUB

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

Vol. XL, No. 10.

15th OCTOBER, 1955.

Price Sixpence.

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

Francis Thompson.

The Rehabilitation of St. Joan—1450-1456*

By LETITIA FAIRFIELD, C.B.E., M.D.

Devotees of St. Joan have often regretted that among the vast mass of literature which has accumulated round her history there has been no accessible version of the processes leading to her rehabilitation. The authoritative work of Quicherat has never been translated into English and is in any case unobtainable. Now Madame Pernoud has given us an invaluable summary of the more important evidence collected over these six years, presented in its true setting. Perhaps only specialists in this most confused period of French history have been aware how intricate that setting was, and how diverse were the cross-currents which brought about the reversal of the iniquitous judgement. A desire to right a terrible wrong had probably little to do with it.

The story begins in 1449 with the re-entry of Charles VII into Rouen, which had been for many years in the hands of his English enemies. Joan's "gentle Dauphin" had nearly, though not quite, driven the intruders out of France and it was a perpetual reproach to him that he owed the recovery of his kingdom to a witch and a heretic. There was, however, no machinery for reviewing a judgement of the Inquisition, a fact which need not surprise us when we remember that we in England had no Court of Criminal Appeal for another five centuries. The only possible course was to make a preliminary inquiry into the validity of the procedure in the "condemnatory" trial, and it happened that the King was lucky enough to find in Rouen several witnesses who at once uncovered serious irregularities. A certain Guillaume Manchon, who had been principal scribe at the trial testified that the records had been falsified to please the judges, that the definitive transcript of the evidence had not been drawn up until long after St. Joan's death, and that there were grave doubts about the contents of the famous "deed of abjuration" presented to the maid for signature. This information can hardly have shocked the King or his advisers, for the falsification of records was a common feature of mediæval legal procedure, but it gave them a cogent reason for continuing their campaign.

*The Retrial of Joan of Arc. By Régine Pernoud. (Methuen, 16s.)

The next essential step for securing revision was to obtain the concurrence of the Dominican Order and of the Pope. The first proved unexpectedly simple, for the Grand Inquisitor, one Jean de Bréhal (for whom Madame Pernoud has more respect than most historians) was anxious to please the King and threw himself with enthusiasm into the long and arduous work of revision. An approach to the Pope was a much more difficult matter. Thanks very largely to the disloyalty and intrigues of the ecclesiastics at the Council of Bâle (including the very men who had judged St. Joan so harshly!) affairs at Rome were at this time in grave disorder and the Papacy much weakened. But by 1452 the Papal Legate in France, Cardinal d'Estouteville, became interested and in concert with Jean de Bréhal inaugurated an "ecclesiastical inquiry." Long and searching questionnaires covering the conduct of the trial and the replies given by St. Joan were submitted to many witnesses. Then, quite in the modern manner, the answers to the questions were laid before famous canonists all over Europe, who were asked to consider the question "ought the same conclusions to be drawn from these answers (i.e. of St. Joan) as were drawn by the Rouen judges?" Their opinions were invariably favourable to St. Joan!

It would have seemed that there was little more to do to establish that the judgement should be upset but the case dragged on. The authorities in Rome were occupied by anxieties consequent on the fall of Constantinople in 1553, and they made no move. By 1555, however, a new and more energetic Pope, Calixtus III, succeeded to the Throne of Peter, and promptly gave the Arc family permission to reopen the suit. Three important Commissioners, the Archbishop of Rouen and the Bishops of Paris and Coutance were appointed to come to a final decision. Their first session was held in Notre Dame—and how one longs to have been present at the moving scene! Our beloved saint's mother and brother, supported by a great delegation from Orleans, appeared to press the suit, and the formal proceedings were drowned by shouts of joy from the congregation. Succeeding meetings of the Commission interviewed witnesses

—Dunois, d'Alençon, Baudricourt—in Rouen, Lorraine, and other parts of France, and the stories they told are now an integral part of the Saint's legend. The visit to Lorraine revealed the hitherto unknown fact that the original judges had also sent a commission to that region, probably to unearth evidence of sorcery, but as nothing could be discovered to the discredit of the Maid the findings had been suppressed! The impression one gets is that the witchcraft charges were never taken seriously and were mainly pursued to satisfy the superstitious English soldiery. A touch of grim comedy is supplied by the evidence of the embarrassed Rouen judges, who by a curious coincidence knew nothing and heard nothing—(or even weren't there at all)—when important questions had been asked of St. Joan.

On July 7th, 1456, the final triumphant scenes took place in Rouen. A copy of the articles of accusation on which Joan had been condemned was torn up, and the final judgement of the Papal Commission pronounced—

"We, sitting on our judgement seats and with our thoughts only on God . . . declare the said trial and sentence (of condemnation) to be contaminated with fraud, calumny, wickedness, contradictions, and manifest errors of fact and law, and together with the abjuration, the execution and all their consequences to have been and to be null, without value and effect, and quashed."

St. Joan's innocence was thus established but the final tribute to her glorious virtues was to be delayed for nearly five centuries.

One would have liked to commend Madame Pernoud's learned and devoted work without reservation but that is hardly possible. It would have been far more effective if it had been more objective and critical. In a world where the concept of an impartial trial had hardly taken shape, it was inevitable that the selection of witnesses, and to some extent the context of their evidence, would be designed to please the King. One may be thankful, however, for this enrichment of our knowledge of St. Joan's short and troubled space on earth.

TREATMENT OF OFFENDERS

The first United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders was held in Geneva in August this year, under the presidency of Monsieur Edouard de Steiger (Switzerland). It was attended by delegates from sixty-six countries.

St. Joan's International Alliance was represented by Madame Pesson-Depret.

Minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners, the recruitment of prison personnel, a recommendation on "prisons without bars" and recommendations on the prevention of juvenile delinquency, were adopted.

These recommendations will now go before the United Nations Social Commission and will later be considered by the United Nations Economic and Social Council, for submission to Governments.

The Congress adopted unanimously the general principles covering the conditions for prison labour and vocational training; precautions to ensure safety and protection of health, etc.

It recommended that further study be made of methods of prevention of juvenile delinquency so that their efficiency might be assessed by practical results.

As stressed by the president of the French delegation the attitude of society towards the law-breaker is changing from retribution to re-education and adjustment to normal life.

The representative of St. Joan's Alliance intervened on three occasions in the deliberations of the Congress. First regarding the *Ensemble des Règles* itself. She expressed concern that the Rules adopted contained no clear statement of the fundamental principle that any measure, any punishment, which does not educate is in vain; that detention must be directed towards re-education rather than punishment, so that the prisoner may be re-integrated into the community.

Secondly, concerning Rule 88, Madame Pesson-Depret said that while all prisoners should have sufficient and nutritious food, she deprecated exceptions being permitted for some prisoners to receive extra food from outside. This might lead to abuse. She instanced the pressure and threats sometimes used by *souteneurs* (imprisoned for exploitation) on prostitutes to furnish them with better food and drink while in prison, so that these prostitutes are still exploited as they have to earn money to provide the extras.

The third intervention concerned the classification of prisoners into those who belonged to a religious denomination and those who did not. Madame Pesson-Depret maintained that under the first shock of deprivation of liberty it is very possible that at the outset of questioning, the prisoner may have a hostile attitude to any suggestion of a visit from a minister of religion. She suggested amending Rule 42 (3) to ensure that while respecting the prisoner's present objection to a visit from a minister of religion the interpretation of the Rules would not prejudice the future, in the event of the prisoner changing his mind during his detention.

CHRISTMAS SALE

Come and buy your Christmas presents at St. Joan's Christmas Sale on Saturday, November 26th, at St. Patrick's Club Room, Soho Square. Bring your friends with you and have lunch and tea. Lunches 12-2 p.m. and tea from 3.30-5.30 (closing time).

Notes and Comments

The Annual Mass for deceased members, associates and benefactors of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance will be offered at St. Patrick's Soho Square on Sunday, November 6th at 10.30. Members are urged to attend and to occupy the front seats on the Gospel side of the Church.

* * *

Under the patronage of His Eminence Cardinal Griffin and of His Excellency Sir Gladwyn Jebb, British Ambassador to France, St. Joan's Quincentenary Celebrations Committee is organising a delegation to take part in the official celebrations in Rouen next year on June 24th and 25th, to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Rehabilitation of St. Joan of Arc.

In May 1931, there was an impressive civic procession to commemorate the 500th anniversary of St. Joan's death, in which the English delegation organised by this committee took part. Following the Union Jack and the banner of St. Joan inscribed "Homage to St. Joan from England", the delegation was given a prominent place in the procession. Money was collected by the committee for a memorial window to St. Joan in Rouen as an *amende honorable* for England's share in the death of St. Joan. Gifts came from men and women of all shades of opinion.

The window, the work of Max Ingrand, depicting scenes from the life of St. Joan and bearing the inscription "Homage from the English", will now be erected in St. Joan's chapel in the restored Cathedral in Rouen in time for the rehabilitation celebrations next year.

Those who would like to join the delegation and share in this act of reparation to St. Joan next June, are asked to send in their names to the hon. secretary of the Quincentenary Committee, Miss F. Barry, c/o St. Joan's Alliance, 55 Berners Street, London, W.1.

* * *

The British Transport Commission have announced that a scheme is being prepared for the establishment of equal pay over a period of six years for the women employed by British Railways in the administrative, technical, and clerical grades. It is hoped this will start early next year.

Again the time lag of seven instalments which is both justice delayed and an insult to the women concerned.

* * *

We have received from Miss Flynn many press cuttings of the wonderfully successful Catholic Life Exhibition held in Melbourne last June. Miss Flynn also sent photographs of the St. Joan's Alliance stand at the Exhibition which took the form of a small sitting room. In it, pride of place was given to a beautiful statue of St. Joan, the

gift of the Rev. Mother Superior of the Convent of the Sacred Heart; below this was a model of the local badge of St. Joan's, i.e. the original badge of the Alliance superimposed on the map of Australia. There was an impressive display of *The Catholic Citizen* and *St. Joan's, Australia* and photographs of personalities prominent in the Alliance, including one of Gabrielle Jeffery, founder of The Catholic Women's Suffrage Society and one of the Pilgrimage Group, holding the Alliance banner, a photograph taken on the steps of Santa Maria Maggiore during the International Conference of the Alliance held in Rome in the Holy Year, 1950.

* * *

We record with regret the sudden death in U.S.A. of Devere Allen, founder, director and editor of *Worldover Press* with which for several years we have exchanged *The Catholic Citizen*. He and Marie Allen sought, by founding *Worldover Press*, to promote world friendship.

* * *

By a vote of seventeen to one (U.S.A.) the United Nations Economic and Social Council in August 1954 recommended that the General Assembly adopt an international Convention on the nationality of married women and submitted to the general Assembly a draft Convention prepared by the Commission on the Status of Women. The Convention provides that a wife's nationality shall not depend automatically on her husband's or be affected by a change in his nationality. Detailed examination of all the articles of the Convention is left to the Assembly.

* * *

The Ministry of Education is inviting suitable candidates to apply before November 16th for the thirty scholarships which are available under the scheme for State Scholarships for Mature Students, i.e. those men and women over twenty-five years of age, who were unable to take a University Course at the normal age, and who have pursued some form of study which shows that they will profit from a course as a full-time student.

The scheme was inaugurated in 1947 and so far 182 men and fifty-two women have taken advantage of it. Up to July 1954, 108 scholars had completed their courses, and of these ninety-seven obtained Honours Degrees, eleven in the First Class. The grants cover tuition and maintenance and there are allowances for dependants.

* * *

We offer our deep sympathy to Miss Maude McGovern, a member of our executive committee, on the death of her mother for whom we ask prayers. R.I.P.

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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MRS. WILLIAMS, B.A.

The International Alliance of Women— Golden Jubilee Congress

The Golden Jubilee Congress of the International Alliance of Women extended over a fortnight in the latter part of August, and differed from other congresses in holding a current seminar at which various problems relating to equality of rights and opportunities of women were freely discussed. The venue of the Congress was in the spacious halls of St. Bridget's Convent, one of the leading Catholic educational institutions in the city of Colombo; the delegates were provided with all possible amenities, such as a mobile bank and a post office, a restaurant and a comfortable lounge on the premises, and a large private park with tropical shady trees and colourful herbaceous borders in which to enjoy their leisure.

Following ancient customs and eastern traditions, the formal opening of the Congress by the Governor-General was heralded by Kandyan dancing by a team of boys in costume, and by welcome rhythms of drummers. The Governor-General gave us a very inspiring address, and after speeches by the president Miss Ester Graff and the president of the host society, Mrs. Deraniyagala, he lit a wick in an antique brass lamp, and was followed by the hon. presidents of the Alliance, Mrs. Corbett Ashby, and others, who did likewise. The hon. secretary of the host society in truly oriental fashion garlanded each of the foreign delegates, thirty-five in number, and afterwards presented them to the Governor-General and to the International President. The leaders of the delegations brought messages of greeting to the Congress; however, as a fraternal delegate, I had the pleasure of conveying greetings from St. Joan's International Alliance at a delightful garden party to which we were all invited by the International Alliance of Women the next day. The artistic Golden Jubilee Birthday Cake with fifty candles, which tasted so delicious, will always recall happy memories of this auspicious occasion.

For a period of ten days conference sessions were held in the mornings with group discussions in the afternoons after which the finding of various groups were recorded. The Professor of Educa-

tion in the University of Ceylon was critical of different aspects of secondary education for girls, and emphasized the fact that political independence does not necessarily mean cultural independence. On the subject of Rural Education, the UNESCO Director assured us that the next great advance from Eastern countries will come from women. He was greeted with loud applause when he said: "Women make the best honorary workers. It is strange that great events are planned with a staff of men only." He wished to "womanise the services." Later in the programme Miss Chave Collisson of the I.A.W. Moral Standard Committee in her inimitable style tackled her subject with much ability and force, and brought conviction home to the delegates, who pledged themselves to support her resolutions for the suppression of legalised prostitution and of tolerated houses.

The two following days, Miss Frieda Miller, U.S.A., and the Labour Commissioner, Ceylon, gave their inspiring talks on Labour Problems, which will lead to the establishment of Women's Bureaux in countries in South-East Asia and elsewhere.

Easily the most eloquent address was that of the Indian delegate, Miss Lakshmi Menon, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of External Affairs, India; she argued that tradition and custom peculiar to the East have undermined complete political independence of women, and modified this theory by stating, "political emancipation without social, economic and educational emancipation and advancement is like attempting to put up a vast structure without a strong foundation." Dr. Andr e Lehmann of Paris, whose legal acumen is well-known to many delegates, had sent a most brilliant paper on the "Equal Civil Rights of Women" to be read by proxy in her absence. The Indonesian delegate, Dr. Subandrio, who had travelled from Moscow, where her husband is the Indonesian Ambassador, supplemented this lecture with interesting references to religions and customs which hinder the imple-

mentation of equal Civil Rights for Women. Again, the rôle of women in industry and its social effects on the structure of family life were ably expounded by Professor Mukerji of Lucknow University, India.

The speakers of the closing sessions drew a vivid picture of the United Nations and Specialized Agencies and their approach towards international understanding and co-operation by means of various schemes of Technical Assistance.

During an interval between two sessions, Professor Mailvaganam of the University of Ceylon held the audience spellbound with his exposition of the Peaceful Development of Nuclear Energy.

At the plenary sessions on the last day with the President of the I.A.W. Miss Ester Graff in the Chair, the resolutions of the various Committees were adopted, and the meeting directed the respective Committees to convey those resolutions to the United Nations. In the Equal Moral Standard Committee the outstanding features were the bilateral conventions on the position of deserted wives and mothers. In Equal Economic Rights the resolutions on part-time work and on the establishment of a Women's Advisory Bureau were mooted with success with the constant reiteration of "Equal Pay for Equal Work." In the Equal Civil and Political Rights Committee a resolution guaranteeing the equality of the rights of spouses was passed with a plea to request affiliated Associations to urge this point with their respective Governments. In Peace and Human Relations the equality of races was stressed and a plea put forward to encourage friendship among all races of mankind; emphasis was laid on the idea of increasing technical assistance to backward races in order to raise their low standard of living, which is a menace to peace. A resolution approved of the use of atomic power for peace purposes, and expressed the hope that no more experiments would be carried out for military purposes.

Both the Governor-General and the Prime Minister, as well as some Societies entertained the delegates at formal receptions. Members of the local Entertainments Committee vied with one another to throw parties for them, and arranged for a special Oriental Ballet to be put on the boards in their honour. At the end of the Congress, coach tours were arranged to historic sites and to beauty spots in Ceylon. The climax, however, was the Farewell Dinner of the Congress, at which the Mayor of Colombo was the chief guest. He expressed the hope that women could help solve some of the problems that men had created for the world. Great conviviality prevailed throughout the evening, and the banquet ended on a note of international peace and good-will.

Noël de Fonseka,
Colombo, Ceylon

REVIEW

Westminster Cathedral. (Pitkin Pictorials, 2s. 6d.) Narrative: The Very Reverend Monsignor Gordon Wheeler, M.A.

Get this book and read Monsignor Wheeler's excellent narrative and text and you will feel that you know something about the foundation of our great Metropolitan Cathedral and of the three Archbishops who were the first Prelates of Westminster. Then use the book as the excellent guide it is to the Cathedral and you will know more of the detailed beauty of the great building than you ever knew before. If you are unable to make a personal visit to this great Shrine of our faith you will still feel that you have become familiar with its beauties and that you have learnt why it is that Catholics all over the world know and love Westminster Cathedral.

The photographs are excellent both as regards lighting and detail, and bring out facts which many of us have not known before. The rear view of the great hanging Crucifix is one of these. It shows the Mother of Sorrows as she once stood at the foot of the cross. I believe that this reproduction of the Crucifix is the first one ever made. All the photographs are in black and white but the lighting is so good that it is easy to picture the richness of the actual colour.

Of course we, of St. Joan's Alliance, are disappointed not to see a reproduction of the mosaic of our Patron Saint, but even in a book of this size it is not possible to depict all the treasures. The Shrine of Blessed John Southworth is very clearly shown and there are photographs of great ceremonies such as the Solemn Liturgical Reception of His Eminence Cardinal Griffin as Cardinal Legate and Cardinal Spellman at the Votive Mass of the Blessed Trinity.

A tribute is given to the architect, John Francis Bentley, in the foreword by His Eminence Cardinal Bernard Griffin.

K.R.D.

Tanganyika. While women enjoy equal rights with men under the laws of the territory and are equally entitled to hold public office or positions in public employment, they are generally, in indigenous society, regarded as inferior to men. Polygamy and the payment of the bride-price are still practised, but polygamy is reported to be decreasing. The Administering Authority (British) reported no fundamental changes in the position, but stressed that African women were participating increasingly in tribal affairs; in a number of areas they took part in local elections, and in a few districts there were women members on the Councils. Numbers of these were also employed by Government and Native Administrations as teachers, nurses and mid-wives. (*Report of the Trusteeship Council to the Tenth Session of the General Assembly.*)

Bride Price

In 1954 the Eastern Regional Government of Nigeria set up a Committee* with the following terms of reference:

"To investigate the social effects of the payment of bride-price in the Eastern Region and to make any recommendations to Executive Council it might think fit with a view to the removal of any anomaly or hardship."

This all-Nigerian Committee, comprising three men and a woman, and with a European Secretary, visited fourteen centres, and heard much oral evidence. It received four hundred and thirteen letters mainly from private individuals: but "there is no divergence of opinion, as far as the written evidence goes, between men and women, both young and old."

The Committee points out that the evidence can, of course, only provide a sample of conditions in the Region; but it has tried to include in the Report only "what can be regarded as confirmed." Its recommendations, therefore, are significant, so far as they go.

The Committee received many complaints against the use of the word "bride-price" and throughout has used the term "dowry" which it defines as "those things whether cash, gifts in kind or labour services which a man gives when he marries a woman and which are regarded in a case of divorce as refundable."

The evidence shows that the bride-price, at its present inflated value, forces men and women to remain single longer than is normal and has resulted in many children being born out of wedlock, and in the spread of prostitution. "Far less people marry and many have died celibates—what a tragedy!" "Villages and towns teem with unmarried girls creating a large door for a regular visitor—the Devil." The men burden themselves with heavy debts at exorbitant rates and pledge land and personal belongings: they are even tempted to steal. Wives who are maltreated can no longer seek the protection of their family as the parents cannot refund the dowry: the element of choice is disappearing and the social status of women has deteriorated—"for if a man pays much for a wife he expects much from her and she is more like a serf than a partner." The value of daughters has ministered to the greed of parents and these have cashed in on the desire of men for educated wives so that where the "dowry" is perhaps £50 for an illiterate girl the amount demanded for one with secondary or higher education may be as high as £150-£200. Pressure is brought to bear on girls to marry rich men—and there is an added temptation to child betrothal.

The evidence goes to show that there is widespread alarm at the excessive amounts asked as bride-price, and that in many places there have

been attempts to fix it, but the Committee found that the idea of the abolition of the payment of "dowry" was received everywhere with horror, except by a few of the educated men and women. One letter contained the following pertinent words: "Remember that when the slave trade was on the people who became rich by it were never pleased to see it abolished."

The recommendations of the Committee on this subject include the limitation both of the dowry and of the incidental expenses of a marriage; the registration of all marriages under native law and customs with details of the dowry agreed and the amount paid, etc. and the issue of an official marriage certificate.

The Committee does not recommend the abolition of bride-price yet, though it expresses the hope that with the spread of education it will eventually disappear. It *does* however recommend the abolition of one of its worst features—child marriage. "No marriage shall be valid where either party is below the age of sixteen."

"The consent of parents or guardians shall be required if either party is below the age of twenty-one, but should not be unreasonably withheld."

It strongly disapproves of the premium for education: "the practice tends to create a social caste and should be regarded as against public policy." It also strongly disapproves of the practice of female circumcision. Though it does not recommend its sudden abolition at present, it does recommend making it a punishable offence to carry out the operation on anyone over the age of one month.

The Committee does not disapprove of the fattening process (the expenses borne by the husband) which takes place either before or after marriage and may last from six to eighteen months; it does "regard as objectionable" the custom of sending the prospective wife to her husband's home for a period of trial before marriage; the custom by which a man with no male issue may send his daughter to get children "where she pleases;" the pawning of women which goes on in some parts; and all customs which are not of the essence of marriage—customs which are not precisely described but which are already forbidden to Christians.

The Committee asks for legislation on such points at Regional level where it is impracticable to ask for it at Local level.

The Government, in a preface to the Report, states that it undertakes to pursue these Recommendations energetically by legislation at one or other level. It is matter for rejoicing that one of the subjects to be tackled at Government level at once is Child Marriage. The Eastern Regional Government of Nigeria "accepts that it is its duty to act as an instrument of enlightenment in these important social problems."

P. C. Challoner

*Report of the Committee on Bride Price—Eastern Region, Nigeria. Printed and Published by the Government Printer, Enugu, 1955. 1s. 6d.

Summary of Reports from National Sections presented to the Thirteenth Council Meeting of St. Joan's International Alliance—April, 1955

Transvaal. St. Joan's Transvaal is still more or less in cold storage, as there is no lessening of the political tension. You will all probably realise this only too well from press reports.

During the past year we were very glad to be able to respond to your request for information on Equal Pay, and to know that Miss Hope Jones' contribution has been so useful.

Advocate Bertha Solomon, M.P. is now turning her attention to this particular question of Equal Pay, and we are following closely her references to it in Parliament.

We send greetings to St. Joan's International, and shall be with you in spirit at your Council Meeting in London. May your deliberations be crowned with God's blessing.

South Australia. The past year has been spent mainly in consolidating strength and gathering information about the Australian aborigines. Expert speakers have addressed us on this subject and we are at least better informed.

The Section was responsible for a legislative amendment whereby the widow of an intestate without children takes a much more liberal share of her husband's estate. It also prevented the reappearance of an objectionable feature in a daily newspaper by protesting on the ground that it contravened the newly-enacted provisions of the Police Offences Act relating to offensive literature.

Membership stands at thirty and there is a good average attendance at monthly meetings. Delegates attend meetings of the Liaison Committee of International Women's Organisations and other councils and committees in whose objects we have a common interest. We joined a deputation to the State Premier to ask for the inclusion of women on juries in criminal cases.

It is intended during the coming year to collect information on the status of women in Australia, particularly in South Australia, with the possible co-operation of other bodies.

The Section has undertaken the editing of "St. Joan's Australia."

Queensland. Membership of the Queensland Section has increased to eighty. The average attendance at the general meetings is fifty.

St. Joan's delegate to the National Council of Women was one of the three speakers at a general meeting held to discuss the proposed uniform Divorce Law, which was the subject for study in 1953. The subject for the early months of 1954 was "The Rate for the Job."

The president of St. Joan's, Mrs. Emil O'Sullivan, and the past president, Mrs. M. V. Fogarty, were received by His Excellency, Archbishop Carboni, the Apostolic Delegate to Australia, when he visited Queensland in July. The Section was

asked to help with the problems confronting students from South-East Asia who are attending Queensland University. In August St. Joan's gave an At Home to the women Overseas Students Association of the University, when a member of St. Joan's, Miss Marijit Chahill, an Indian from Malaya, gave an interesting address on "Education in Malaya."

The past president submitted a report to the National Council of Women in her capacity as Home Economics Adviser. The president submitted a proposal which was favourably received by the Trustees of the Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Gift Fund, for setting up a system of training women to help families in their own homes, during sickness and stress which would centralise the efforts of existing organisations, and raise the status of the women prepared to do this practical work.

Mrs. Una Mulholland, a foundation member of St. Joan's in Queensland is the only woman member on the recently appointed Literature Board of Review which is to work for an improvement in the field of Children's Literature.

A blind member of St. Joan's, Miss Mercy Griffin, has been on a two years' scholarship to America to learn the newest methods for the teaching of the blind.

St. Joan's, Queensland is represented on the National Council of Women of Queensland; Pan Pacific Association; Australian Association of United Nations; Catholic Theatre; Girl Guides Association; and the University of Queensland.

HON. TREASURER'S NOTE

First of all—a very sincere "thank you" to the kind member who has given us the £5 to pay for the accents on the new typewriter and also to the member who has given us £1 towards the servicing of the machine. The Alliance is most grateful. But another £1 10s. is required for servicing if any kind member feels generous.

Secondly, the Christmas Sale is only six weeks ahead. We should be most pleased to receive goods of all kinds to fill the stalls. New things please—also groceries and promises of sweets and cakes. We are not being quite so ambitious this year but are depending on you to help us to make it a big success. Also we need helpers.

Will you please send your names as soon as possible to the office, together with the times you can come and at what stall you would prefer to help. Do make a note of the date—Saturday, November 26th, and the place—St. Patrick's Clubroom, Soho Square.

Noreen K. Carr

LA RÉALITÉ FÉMININE

Conscience de la Féminité. Par Suzanne Nouvion, Jeanne Picard etc. Introduction et conclusion de Pauline Le Cormier. (Editions Familiales de France.)

Une habitude de pensée multi séculaire, qui aujourd' hui encore prévaut le plus souvent, définit la femme par rapport à l'homme. L'humain est ce qui appartient à celui-ci. Il est en quelque sorte la table de référence.

Le livre paru sous le titre *Conscience de la Féminité* a le mérite de rompre avec cette position de pensée. A la recherche de la réalité féminine a été lancée une équipe de femmes, toutes catholiques, mais de genres de vie et de formes d'expérience différentes.

Alors que, durant tant de siècles, la femme n'avait guère été pensée que par l'homme, n'avait guère eu le droit de se connaître qu'au travers de la vision masculine, l'ouvrage dont nous parlons représente une idée intéressante, sinon une initiative courageuse.

Le très grand nombre (trop grand peut-être) des collaboratrices, d'un choix manifestement éclectique, auxquels semble s'être ajouté un certain manque d'entente préalable, nuisent à l'unité de l'oeuvre. Ici ou là, on aimerait une pensée plus ferme, une concordance de vues mieux dégagée.

Tel que, le livre mérite l'attention. Il faut souhaiter le voir largement répandu. A certains esprits, encore mal fixés sur le sens et la portée de l'évolution féminine, tel ou tel chapitre pourra apporter d'utiles lumières. Quant à l'ensemble des femmes catholiques, souvent encore si timides, si peu hardies pour se penser, penser leur temps, penser leur foi, il leur sera une invite à se dépouiller des complexes paralysants, et à se mettre plus vaillamment au travail pour achever en elles et autour d'elles ce qui manque encore, dans les perspectives de la condition féminine, à l'oeuvre de la rédemption.

P.A.

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