

THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN

Organ of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance (formerly Catholic Women's Suffrage Society),
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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

Go Spin, You Jade

By Shirley Williams

The one-time jades who have been transformed into human beings of equivalent status to their erstwhile masters owe a great deal to many of the women described in Mrs. D. L. Hobman's latest book. *Go Spin, You Jade** is a series of brief biographies of women who made their mark in the fields they chose to make their own. It falls roughly into two halves. The first half is concerned with outstanding women in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; the second half more specifically with the great pioneers of the emancipation of women in the late eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The publisher describes this book as "an account of women's progress from a subservient to an independent status . . .", a rather misleading over-simplification both of the book and of history. For, as Mrs. Hobman indicates, it is clear that many women in the eighteenth century—admittedly only those of wealth and culture—were accepted as equals by men of the same social milieu, even by men of such distinction as Dr. Johnson. Nor do earlier eras present a uniform pattern of subjection. There is reason to believe that women exercised considerable influence in Ancient Egypt, while in mediaeval Europe some religious women held positions of considerable authority and responsibility. The picture is not one, then, of steady progress, but rather of a series of advances and retreats, culminating in the greatest advance of all, that of our own times. As Mrs. Hobman wisely remarks, it is too early to regard this last advance as somehow sacrosanct and irreversible.

Readers of *Go Spin, You Jade*, will be grateful to Mrs. Hobman for the fascinating glimpses of the lives of many little-known women, as well as for the fuller accounts of the famous pioneers of the suffrage movement. Nevertheless, there is a certain lack of cohesion in this book. It is not

quite clear what the author is trying to achieve. The principle on which this group of women has been chosen, according to the author, is their faith in their own sex. Yet such figures as Aphra Behn, the playwright, and Charlotte Charke, though interesting enough in their own right, do not seem to have been greatly concerned with the status of women as a sex.

It may be that Mrs. Hobman feels that women who had enough faith in themselves to back the prejudices of conventional society did in practice strengthen the case for equality. If that is so, then surely there are some women not in the book with a better claim than those included in it—for instance, Mrs. Siddons and Fanny Burney.

As one moves into the more familiar territory of the nineteenth century, one feels the need of more information. Mrs. Hobman is evidently intrigued by the personal lives of her gallery of distinguished women—their childhood, their looks, their relations with parents and with husbands and fiancés. That is all to the good, but too often there is not enough about the actual achievements for which these women are famed.

The latter part of the book contains a concise description of the suffrage movement, and of the contributions made respectively by the N.U.W.S.S. and the W.S.P.U. The characters of Mrs. Fawcett and of Mrs. Pankhurst emerge from these events, underlining their difference of approach to the task of persuading a Parliament of men to give rights to women. In coming to the present day, Mrs. Hobman concludes by reviewing the achievements of women up to now. "Women," she says "have shown themselves able to compete with men." But they have the disadvantage of unequal physical strength—a disadvantage greatly modified by the Industrial Revolution—and they do not reveal the exceptional mental gifts summed up in the word "genius" as often as men. There are few women geniuses in the arts, says the author, and "least of all are they to be found in the sphere of science."

* *Go Spin, You Jade*. By D. L. Hobman (Watts 15s.)

This reviewer must quarrel with the last of these statements. When the vast disparity in the numbers of men and women working in science is taken into account, it would appear that women's achievement in science is as great as in any other field except literature and possibly social Science. Such names as those of Marie Curie and Kathleen Lonsdale spring to mind. In the Soviet Union, which, with all its evils, has at least made women equal in practice as well as in theory, many of the highest scientific posts are held by women, including that of Vice-President of the Soviet Academy of Sciences.

Why is it that women have produced fewer geniuses than men? Is the answer to be found in some basic and insuperable flaw in the feminine intellect? One reason, of course, is that there are fewer candidates for sustained intellectual work among women than among men, because so many women marry and become absorbed in the upbringing of their children. No doubt most women can name at least one friend of outstanding ability whose interests have found little outlet outside home and family. But the other reason seems to lie in something more insidious. Women have not completely rejected the idea of their own inferiority, which has been accepted for so long. They feel, very often, on the defensive about their interests and their achievements. Their confidence is sometimes only paper-thin, and without confidence in oneself, nobody can go beyond the limits of accepted ideas. In short, women have won their equality, but they have not yet learned to act as if they really believed in it.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE CENTENARIES IN 1958

Though much of the lime-light will be focussed this year on Mrs. Pankhurst, the centenary of whose birth occurs on July 14th, two other prominent leaders of the women's suffrage movement were also born a hundred years ago.

Lady Frances Balfour, daughter of the eighth Duke of Argyll, was born on February 22nd, 1858. A bonny fighter, she worked unremittingly in the constitutional women's suffrage campaign, and with Mrs. Fawcett, led at least one of the great processions through the streets. But all aspects of the advancement of women were dear to her heart. A devoted daughter of the Church of Scotland, she was one of the first to sign a petition to the General Assembly asking for the admission of women to the ministry. She fought a measure designed to abolish the employment of women as barmaids. Women police found in her a strong champion. Two years before her

death, which occurred in 1931, she spoke vigorously against the decision of certain London hospitals to close their doors to women students.

She was a member of the Executive Committee of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies from its formation in 1897 till 1918 when, after the winning of the first measure of women's enfranchisement, it became the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship. She was also on the Executive Committee of the National Council of Women. She was appointed to serve on the Royal Commission on Divorce in 1909, at a time when such appointments of women were exceedingly rare. King Edward VII is said to have demurred at the appointment, feeling that the subject was an unpleasant one for a woman, but agreed when the Prime Minister pointed out that men and women were equally involved in the business of the Divorce Court. She was an excellent speaker and a gifted writer. Her reminiscences, "Ne Obliviscaris: Dinna Forget," were published in two volumes in 1930. Among her biographies was one on Dr. Elsie Inglis, Commandant of the Scottish Women's Hospital in Serbia in the first world war.

Though a warm supporter of her sex, she was a caustic critic of the fashions and make-up adopted by modern girls. She herself always wore a high-necked black dress, surmounted by a most becoming black bonnet.

Dame Ethel Smyth, the composer and writer, was born on April 22nd, 1858, and died on May 9th, 1944. Her centenary will be celebrated in musical and literary circles, but she deserves honour also as a leader of the women's suffrage movement. She joined the militant wing in 1912. Her "March of the Women", with words by Cicely Hamilton, was adopted by the Women's Social and Political Union as their "war-song", and the suffragettes sang it at their meetings and marched to its strains. The melody was used later in one of her operas. A well-known incident in her career showed her leaning from the window of her cell in Holloway Prison, while serving a sentence for breaking windows, conducting her March with a toothbrush as baton, while her fellow suffragette prisoners paraded round the exercise yard below. An expert shot herself, it is rumoured that she tried to teach Mrs. Pankhurst to throw stones on a lonely part of Hook Heath, not however very successfully, for Mrs. Pankhurst was always apt to miss her mark. Perhaps the best portrait of Mrs. Pankhurst is that given by Dame Ethel Smyth in her book, "Female Pipings in Eden."

Further information is available in *Women's Service Library, 27 Wilfred Street, Westminster, S.W.1.*

Notes and Comments

According to tradition Mass was offered for Gabrielle Jeffery, founder of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, and Leonora de Alberti, first editor of *The Catholic Citizen*. Miss Jeffery's anniversary fell on March 19th and Miss de Alberti's on March 26th.

* * *

At the Memorial Service for Dame Christabel Pankhurst at St. Martin-in-the-Fields, on March 14th, the Alliance was represented by Miss Barry, Miss Graham and Miss Jameson.

In his address Lord Pethick-Lawrence said: "There are few people of whom it can be said that they changed the course of human history and that they changed it for the better. But this can with confidence be said of Christabel Pankhurst. Therefore let us today praise this famous woman."

* * *

We record with sorrow the death of Henry Noel Brailsford on March 23rd. He was a staunch supporter of the Votes for Women campaign. He acted as secretary of the famous All-Party Conciliation Committee, of which Lord Lytton was chairman. Together with H. W. Nevinson, that other staunch supporter of Woman Suffrage, he resigned from the position of leader writer of the *Daily News* in protest against the forcible feeding of suffragettes.

* * *

The Guardianship of Infants Bill, initiated by the Status of Women Committee was defeated in the House of Lord by 44 votes to 23 on March 15th. Lord Chorley, who presented the Bill, said that its purpose was to remove one of the last anomalies in the status of women, by giving the mother of a legitimate child the same rights of guardianship as those now given only to the father. The father is still the guardian at Common Law and he can disregard the mother's views in any particular matter relating to the welfare of the child. In certain cases it is possible for the mother to have the matter brought before the Court, under the Guardianship of Infants Act, 1925. This Act removed the worst of the anomalies but did not in fact confer upon the mother equal rights of guardianship with the father. Difficulty still exists especially in cases where the parents are living apart. If, for instance a foreign passport is wanted for a child, the Passport Office is not allowed to issue it to the mother as she is not the legal guardian of the child.

Lord Chesham, on behalf of the Government, said that though he was sympathetic to the Bill in principle, he thought it would raise more difficulties than it would resolve. Lord Pethick

Lawrence, Lord Silkin and Lord Stansgate suggested that it would be better to pass the Second Reading and iron out the difficulties in Committee.

We regret that the Bill failed to pass its Second Reading and hope that a similar Bill may be introduced in the House of Commons before long. Members should write to their M.P. asking him to support such a Bill.

* * *

Archbishop Heenan speaking to the Girls' Welfare Association in the Liverpool Town Hall, drew attention to the plight of young widows with small children who were compelled to go out to work and put their children in nurseries. His Grace said he wished to create a public conscience on the matter and made a plea for more generous allowances and public assistance for these widows. Adequate allowances would cost the country less than providing nurseries.

* * *

The Mental Health Research Fund has awarded £1,050 to Dr. T. C. N. Gibbens of the Institute of Psychiatry at the Maudesley Hospital, London, for research in regard to the clients of prostitutes. Whereas, up till now the spotlight of research has been directed solely on the prostitute, now, for the first time, attention is to be given to her client. The object of the investigation is to find out the motives animating the male customer in the transaction, and any psychological problems involved.

* * *

We send our congratulations to Mrs. McAlister (Lab.) on her election to Parliament for the Kelvingrove division of Glasgow. This brings the number of women in Parliament to twenty-eight. Mrs. McAlister and Mrs. Cullen are the only two Catholic women in the House of Commons.

* * *

We wish success to Miss Moyra Dennehy, Assistant Secretary of the Board of Trade in her negotiations in Tunis, where she was leader of the first direct Tunisia-British Trade Agreement.

* * *

We offer our congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Mbu on the birth of their second child, a daughter, on March 14th.

* * *

We send our deep sympathy to Miss Mann on the death of her mother and ask our members to remember her in their prayers. R.I.P.

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE

AND

Editorial Office of "The Catholic Citizen"

8^B DRYDEN CHAMBERS, 119 OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W.1. Tel. Gerrard 4564

Signed articles do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Society

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The Forty-Seventh Annual Meeting

The forty-seventh Annual Meeting of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance was held on March 15th, 1958, at Wilfred Street, Westminster, under the chairmanship of Mrs. Shattock, M.D., D.P.M. The minutes of the forty-seventh Annual Meeting were read by the hon. secretary and passed, and the Annual Report was read by Miss W. M. Price. Unfortunately, the Editor of *The Catholic Citizen*, Miss Christine Spender was unable to be present, and her report was read by Miss Barry. Thanks to the generosity of a member in taking out many subscriptions for Missioners and others, the deficit on *The Catholic Citizen* was less than last year's, in spite of continually rising costs.

Miss Walmesley, moving the adoption of the report, spoke of it as eloquent evidence of the work being done by St. Joan's. She recalled how, forty-seven years ago, when the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society was founded, women, legally and politically, were regarded rather as property than as personalities. This fine body of Catholic women had united with other women's organisations and, under the patronage of St. Joan, had in many parts of the world made a valuable contribution to the raising of the status of women. St. Joan's Alliance had made a contribution out of all proportion to its numbers and we had every reason to be proud of this. Catholic women can and must make full use of their gifts. *The Catholic Citizen* said Miss Walmesley was so well-informed that it could always be relied upon for its accuracy.

Mrs. Jessie Power, a new member of the Alliance, in seconding the adoption of the Report, said how impressed she was by the variety and catholicity of the interests of St. Joan's. She felt that it maintained a quiet watchfulness and awareness of political life. When Mrs. Power was in Geneva last year, she heard people speak with pride of the work done by St. Joan's: this aroused her interest and she became a member shortly afterwards. Politics, she said, were not merely the job of politicians, but were for all of

us. We, in England, took many of our freedoms for granted, but, in her own country, South Africa, many of the basic rights were still not recognised. She urged all members present to tell more people about St. Joan's and the wonderful work the Alliance was doing.

Miss Gabrielle Daye the next speaker, wondered if, in forty-seven years, everything had not already been said, but, as she so neatly pointed out, laws and regulations such as that for Equal Pay can be passed on paper, but are often circumvented. She quoted the case of the conductor of the Carl Rosa Opera Company Orchestra who was dismissed from her post when it was thought that the Carl Rosa and Sadlers Wells Companies might merge. Eternal vigilance must be our watchword so that future generations could benefit from our present struggles.

Miss Carr, the hon. treasurer, presented the Financial Report. The appeal for funds was, if possible, more eloquent and ingenious than ever. Miss Carr reminded members that the following day was Mothering Sunday, and she was sure that all present were fully aware of what a mother meant to her children. Our "mother" of 119, Oxford Street, was greatly in want and surely the assembled gathering could not see her in such dire need without wanting to come to her rescue! She suggested that members might like to put by 2s. 6d. a month and begged members to be as generous as possible so that her hoped-for total of £70 towards the office rent could be reached. Miss Jameson, from the floor, said that she would give £5 if nine other members would do the same. The response was immediate and, in fact, over £77 was collected at the meeting, and, with the sums promised, a total of just under £100 was reached—a record amount.

As no new nominations had been submitted, the Executive Committee was once again re-elected "en bloc", Councillor Miss Hulme proposed its re-election and Miss Cave seconded the proposal.

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE FORTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING

15th MARCH, 1958

1. Age of Marriage

St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, believing that there should be a universal legal age of marriage for boys and girls, of not less than sixteen years, urges the Government to instruct its delegate to the Status of Women Commission to propose a Resolution urging all States to promote legislation to this end.

2. Women Peers

St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance welcomes the fact that the Life Peerages Bill makes provision for the creation of women peers. The Alliance deplores the continued exclusion from the House of Lords of the hereditary women peers

3. Maintenance Orders

St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance calls upon the Government so to amend the Maintenance Orders Bill, as to ensure that a prison sentence shall not affect the liability to make payments under a Maintenance Order.

4. Equal Guardianship of Infants

St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance welcomes the introduction of the Guardianship of Infants Bill, and calls upon the Government to give facilities for its early passage into law.

5. Wolfenden Report

St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance deplores the fact that the Wolfenden Report, Part 3—Prostitution—fails to grapple with the basic aspects of the problem, and that its recommendations endorse the present unjust solicitation laws. The Alliance reiterates its demand for the repeal of the present unjust solicitation laws and the substitution of a general law against annoyance or molestation (which would apply equally to both sexes) and under which the evidence of the person annoyed would be necessary in order to obtain a conviction.

6. Equal Pay

St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance calls upon the Government to establish equal pay throughout the Government Services without delay. It deplores the postponement of Equal Pay until 1961 and the exclusion of women in the Industrial Grades from even this scheme.

7. Domicil

St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance calls upon the Government to introduce and pass legislation to entitle a married woman to acquire a domicil of her own in the same way as a man or a single woman.

8. Taxation

St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance calls for the separate taxation of married persons and the removal of all sex discrimination in taxation.

9. Education

St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance reiterates its demand for full financial equality for Catholic Schools in the national scheme for education. It further urges that in all schemes of education equal opportunity be made available for boys and girls, both in this country and in all territories under British administration

Dame Vera Laughton Mathews spoke of the International work; she mentioned the Council Meeting held in Paris last September, at which several distinguished Frenchwomen had been present, and said how pleased the Alliance had been to welcome Soeur Marie André with her expert knowledge of the conditions of the women of Africa.

A letter had been sent to the appropriate authority begging that the prayer in the Nuptial Mass said over the bride and bridegroom be so worded as to apply to both spouses. On the question of female circumcision Dame Vera reported that a request had been sent to the World Health Organisation asking for a Conference to be convened to which the chief Medical Officers of Health of the countries where this custom is practised should be invited. Dame Vera told the members that the next Council Meeting would be held in Brussels in September; she hoped that many members would be able to go and enjoy both the meetings of St. Joan's and the World Fair at the same time. She mentioned, also, that many African women from the Congo would be present in Brussels at the time and that members would have occasion to meet them.

The Chairman then addressed the meeting and said she wished to underline one or two items of the Report. She spoke of the possibility, now seriously considered, of having women peers in the House of Lords. The Guardianship of Infants Bill had been introduced in the House of Lords, and even if it did not go through, the fact that the matter was being publicised would perhaps stir public opinion. Dr. Shattock pointed out that, although we are not pleased with the Wolfenden Report, it has given us an opportunity to say what we think about it and there is a chance that opinion will be formed and injustice no longer meted out to the prostitute. The principles for which the Alliance stands were also held by those who had fought so valiantly in Italy for the abolition of the *maisons tolérées* in that country. Lastly, Dr. Shattock spoke of the enormous amount of work done at the office by a small group of people who never refused a request, and she paid great tribute to *The Catholic Citizen* and its editor; the scope of the paper was world-wide and it was much appreciated wherever it was read.

The resolutions were then put to the Meeting and passed.

Miss Carr and her team, as usual, provided a wonderful tea and members enjoyed this pleasant ending to a most successful afternoon.

After the meeting, the executive committee unanimously re-elected Dr. Shattock chairman of the Alliance.

THE MONTH IN PARLIAMENT

On March 7th, Mr. Stevens' Bill, the Metropolitan Police Act, 1838 (Amendment) Bill had its Second Reading. It seeks to amend Section 54, paragraph 13 of the 1839 Act, fixing a maximum of 40s. penalty for certain offences, such as using "threatening, abusive or insulting Words or Behaviour with Intent to provoke a Breach of the Peace." Mr. Stevens in moving the Second Reading said that in framing the Bill, he had hooliganism in mind, but prosecutions for soliciting could also be made under Section 54. He did not consider that imprisonment was an appropriate penalty for hooliganism and offences of that sort; and with regard to prostitution, as consideration was being given by the Government to the Wolfenden Report, it would be inexpedient to recommend imprisonment for that kind of offence. The only thing that remained was the proposal, at present incorporated in the Bill, to increase the penalty to a maximum of £10 for the first offence and £20 for subsequent offences.

Sir Eric Errington said in opposing the Bill, that a fine not exceeding £20 was inadequate to deal with these disturbances. The problem of the prostitute should be approached from a much more enlightened and more intelligent up-to-date view.

Brigadier Clarke complained that too many policemen were occupied with parking offences when they should be stopping old ladies from being hit over the head. If policemen were doing their proper job, there would not be such a necessity for his continually having to press for flogging and hanging. He said with regard to prostitution, there should be a progressive fine.

Sir Hugh Lucas Tooth said that the body of the Bill referred to paragraph 13 of Section 549 of the 1839 Act and he felt that it was wrong to increase the fine under Section 54, paragraph 13, while not increasing the fine for soliciting under paragraph 11. Mr. Renton, Joint Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department, said that while it was true that a number of prostitutes were brought up under paragraph 13, they were charged under that paragraph with an entirely different offence, not that of soliciting but of using insulting words and behaviour. . . . If it is right to increase the penalty for using insulting words and behaviour, then the fact that it happens to be an offence of which prostitutes are sometimes guilty should not deter us from increasing the penalty for it." On March 12th, the House discussed Mr. Silverman's new clause to the Maintenance Orders Bill, which enables a magistrate's Court to discharge an order which has been made for the committal to prison of any person for failure to comply with a maintenance order. As the Bill is now, there is no opportunity for persons with a committal order against them

to comply with the principles of the Bill, which are to ensure that women obtain the payments to which they are entitled and to keep men out of prison. On this clause, the Government was defeated by three votes. On the question that the clause be added to the Bill, the numbers were equal and the Deputy-Speaker gave his casting vote as "No." In the resumed debate on March 25th, Mr. Renton gave an undertaking that when the Bill was considered in the House of Lords, the Government would table, for consideration, an amendment to cover this point. On the Third Reading of the Bill, Mr. Renton recalled that the measure originated as a private member's Bill by Miss Joan Vickers and said: "She can feel justly proud in seeing her idea now mainly accepted by the House and embodied in a Bill which is workable."

Contrary to expectation, the Life Peerages Bill for the creation of life peerages for men and women did not receive the Royal Assent before Easter. During the Report stage, Miss Jennie Lee, on behalf of some ten women Labour members moved an amendment to delete the provision that women life peers should be allowed to sit in the House of Lords. Miss Lee explained that, as she did not believe in the "other place", she was opposed to members of her own sex being given peerages because she thought their presence would improve the House of Lords. She said she was putting forward a feminist and not an anti-feminist argument. If the Government thought they were honouring women by introducing women peers into the other House, why did they not begin with the hereditary peeresses?

The ten Labour women who sponsored the amendment were Mrs. Butler, Miss Burton, Mrs. Castle, Mrs. Cullen, Miss Lee, Lady Megan Lloyd George, Mrs. McAlister, Mrs. Mann, Mrs. Slater and Mrs. White. Three Labour women voted against it, Miss Bacon, Mrs. Braddock and Mrs. Corbet. The amendment was lost by 30 votes to 59. Mr. Butler said the expression of opinion by a noble Lord that "it was very difficult to sit with ladies" struck him as an absolute anachronism. As to the problem of the hereditary peeresses, the position was very difficult. In the claim of Viscountess Rhondda in 1922, it was made clear that a peerage held by a peeress in her own right was one to which in law the incident of exercising the right to receive a writ is not and never was attached. The Bill was not designed to enlarge this matter or deal with it at all. That might well have to come when they were in power in the next Parliament. The Bill passed its Third Reading on April 2nd by 292 votes to 241.

P. M. Brandt

LETTER FROM BRUSSELS II

Dear St. Joan's Alliance,

Having read with concern, in the February issue of *The Catholic Citizen*, about an increase in unequal pay for 10,000 British laundry workers, we thought you might be interested in the speech on the subject of Equal Pay, made by the Minister of Labour last month at a luncheon given by the National Council of Women.

Equal Pay has long been in force in the Belgian Civil Service and in the teaching profession, but private business still has lower rates for women workers and employees. The difference between men and women's salaries was about 40 per cent. as a result of Trade Union action and Government prompting at the time of collective bargaining in each industry for the minimum wage. "Our Government having signed and ratified I.L.O. Conventions No. 100 on Equal Pay is doing its best to live up to its obligations," said the Minister. Article 119 of the recent European Treaty on the Common Market, also signed and ratified by Belgium, is limited in scope, but more definite than the I.L.O. Convention as it puts the Government under obligation to ensure an equal minimum wage within a few years time. This treaty has not been ratified by all the countries concerned, and we feel failure to ensure equal pay in one country will prove detrimental to the position of women in every other, when frontiers are down and workers free to mingle.

Belgian women also see promise in the work of a joint-committee of workers and employers, set up by the Government a few years ago for objective and fair job assessment on a technical and psychological basis. The Committee has evolved twenty-nine criteria based (1) on the technical and professional training necessary for the job, (2) on its physical and mental requirements, (3) on the character and sense of responsibility essential to the profession. So far, the Committee has studied occupations in which relatively few women are employed (steel, electricity, chemical industry, municipal government) but we hope it may get round to jobs considered as women's work, and establish beyond discussion the demands these professions make on the worker, so as to get the woman worker's qualifications recognised in a field important to a great number of women.

Commenting on the obstacles to Equal Pay, the Minister of Labour stressed the psychological aspect of the question. Women workers fear equal pay for they believe they then would be the first to be dismissed in case of unemployment.

Women workers are neither active nor influential in trade unions. They have little time for organisation when carrying the double load of a

professional and housewife's job. Employers stress the greater turnover among women workers, their frequent absence on account of family worries and their lack of interest in their tools. The Minister of Labour urged women's organisations to tackle these psychological drawbacks. Public opinion must be enlisted on the side of equal pay before it comes into effect, in all trades and professions, and there must be no set-backs in neighbouring countries to destroy our effort.

Professional training for girls in relation to new techniques and automation is also being studied in many circles. Girls must be persuaded to qualify for better jobs and their parents must be convinced of the necessity for them to train. Despite the prejudice that all this is not necessary for girls, there is no great problem where bright children are concerned. The difficulty is to find and provide the right training for the less gifted, who yet must live human lives. **F. Baetens**

CATHOLIC AFRICAN CENTRE

A Conference on "The Future of Africa", convened by the Africa Committee of the Sword of the Spirit was held at the Holy Rood Convent, London, on March 26th and 27th, under the chairmanship of Mr. Patrick Wall, M.P. Representatives were present from forty-six Orders and Congregations of men and women and of thirty-one National Societies. The Conference decided to set up a permanent Catholic African Centre in London. The Centre would collect information on African affairs generally and missionary activities; contact visitors from Africa; serve as a clearing house for the recruitment of lay Catholics for educational, medical and social services; and provide a liaison between lay helpers and the Missions. St. Joan's Alliance was represented at the Conference by the Hon. Secretary.

HON. TREASURER'S NOTE

It is nice not to have to beg for money this month. The result of the appeal at the Annual Meeting for the office rent was astonishing—just under £100, the best we have ever made.

We are indeed grateful to all our generous donors; also to the kind friend, who, on reading the appeal in the *Catholic Citizen* to those who were not at the meeting, sent a cheque for £20. We thank him for his generosity.

To date we have received a total of £123. Congratulations! **Noreen K. Carr**

BOOKS RECEIVED

The Challenge of Bernadette. By Hugh Ross Williamson (Burns Oates, 10s. 6d.)
David and Jonathan. By Winefride Nolan (Macmillan, 10s. 6d.)

UNITED NATIONS

At the United Nations Conference of Non-Governmental Organisations held in New York on 26th and 27th February, 1958, St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance was represented by Miss F. M. McGillicuddy and Dr. Magda de Spur.

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The twelfth session of the Status of Women Commission opened in Geneva on March 17th. The Begum Anwar Ahmed of Pakistan was elected chairman; Miss Uldarica Manas of Cuba, First Vice-Chairman; Mrs. Zofia Dembinska of Poland, Second Vice-Chairman; and Mrs. Mina Ben-Zvi of Israel, Rapporteur. St. Joan's International Alliance was represented by Mademoiselle Archinard and Miss P. C. Challoner.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

From "The Catholic Citizen," April 15th, 1933

Miss Nancy Stewart Parnell, spoke of objections made to the continuance of feminist activities by those who did not realise how long the road still was before the attainment of equality, and she quoted the case of a girl-student in Manchester who had come to that realisation only when, at her father's wish, she had sought to train at the College of Technology, in order to succeed him in the management of his cotton-mill, and had found—like the 23 other women students among the 1,000 men at that College—that every obstacle was put in her path.

The vote, said Miss Parnell, was only the entry to the Promised Land, but that entry made, there were still the fields to till, the temples to build. And she ended with a variant on the inscription of the statue of her great kinsman in Dublin, "No man can set a barrier to the march of a sex, no man can say to a sex 'thus far and no further'."

Twenty-second Annual Meeting

THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE and ST. JOAN'S ALLIANCE.

Supper Meeting

Tuesday, April 22nd at 6-30

at

THE MINERVA CLUB,
28a BRUNSWICK SQUARE, W.C.1.

MISS P. C. CHALLONER, M.A.

will speak on

The Twelfth Session of the Status of Women Commission.

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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.

MEMBERSHIP

All Catholic women are eligible as Members, who approve the object and methods, and will pay a minimum annual subscription of £1 which includes *The Catholic Citizen*. 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.

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