

THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN

*Organ of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance (formerly Catholic Women's Suffrage Society),
8^B, Dryden Chambers, 119 Oxford Street, London W.1.*

VOL. XLIV. No. 1

15th JANUARY, 1958

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 Wolfenden Report

~~by D. D. D. D. D.~~

The debate in the House of Lords on the Wolfenden Report* (Part Three—Prostitution) gave many instances of welcome support for the principles which the Alliance has always upheld, and which were enunciated forcefully by Josephine Butler, at the time of the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act (1886). One speaker, only, mentioned by name the great woman whose fight against appalling odds has obviously affected public opinion even where it does not follow her. The Bishop of St. Albans quoted her words: "All proposals for dealing with solicitation and other repressive measures applied to women alone, while they have an appearance of virtue about them have this evil in them—that they tend to foster in the minds of men that unequal moral standard which is at the bottom of the whole mischief."

Lord Pakenham, opening the debate, quoted the leaders of Catholic and Anglican thought as stressing the distinction between crime and sin, which, as the Archbishop of Canterbury in his subsequent speech pointed out, differentiates free from totalitarian States and leaves the adult human being the awful responsibility for his own actions which is the mark of his spiritual dignity. While not himself averse from measures to increase the penalties for prostitution, Lord Pakenham said he was aware that some of the "most reputable organisations" are opposed to "a good deal of the Wolfenden approach" on this subject.

We cannot but regret that Lord Lothian seemed satisfied that action should be concentrated on the "essential and urgent aim—the removal of prostitutes from the streets." This is "sweeping the dirt under the carpet" with a vengeance. As Lord Moynihan pointed out, the means advocated by the Committee, i.e. heavier fines and imprisonment for prostitutes, were tried in Leeds and were "a complete and absolute success—the prostitutes simply went elsewhere and their

clients with them!" The Committee itself recognises that these measures will lead to "the closer organisation of the trade, with greater opportunities for exploiting prostitutes and greater dangers that new classes of middlemen (e.g. taxi-drivers and hotel porters) will arise. We think it possible," said the Committee, "even probable, that there will be an extension of the call-girl system and perhaps a growth in the activities of touts. . . . Another possible consequence is an increase in small advertisements in shops or local newspapers, offering the services of 'masseuses', 'models' or 'companions'." The weak (we would say complacent) acceptance of such consequences was regretted by the Archbishop of Canterbury. To quote Lord Moynihan again: "We abhor far more those who sponsor prostitution . . . let us tighten up the penalties for them."

Lord Moynihan also drew attention to the age of consent. "I have never understood," he said, "why the age of consent for a girl is sixteen, whereas the age of call-up is eighteen, and the age for voting twenty-one. If the law is to be changed . . . I think we should look straight away at the question of raising the age of consent of these young girls."

St. Joan's Alliance deplores the fact that the Committee recommends the retention of the term "common prostitute," an unjust prejudgment of the offender which places the prostitute apart from all other offenders as outside the law, and is doubly unjust, since the thing for which she solicits is not itself against the law. The Committee's recommendations go further—they propose to eliminate the requirement to establish annoyance—thus putting an undue power in the hands of the police, and throwing on them an invidious responsibility. St. Joan's Alliance has always demanded that there should be one law applicable to both sexes and all classes, a law which shall require the evidence of the person annoyed. On the solicitation of women by men, kerb-crawling and the like, the Committee says somewhat pusillanimously: "We do not feel able to make any positive recommendation."

* **Report of the Committee on Homosexual Offences and Prostitution.** (H.M. Stationery Office, 5s., Cmnd. 247.)

The Archbishop of Canterbury summed up the situation. "Society has been of a split mind on the matter." It agrees that prostitution is undesirable but takes for granted that men must have a reasonable supply of prostitutes. So far "women have borne the whole brunt of their own and their customers' complicity in this trade" and the Report recommends that the women alone should still bear the consequences of carrying it on.

Lord Brabazon of Tara pointed out that the charge was not a moral one, it is that the women are a nuisance and *they* are to be chivied, whereas "the man who is a potent factor in the trade can do nothing wrong." "Frankly," he said, "that is a situation which I find one-sided and to which I cannot subscribe."

It is impossible to quote all the speakers and we have quoted with gratitude those who support our conception of justice, in whole or in part. Of those who took a different view, only the Earl of Huntingdon seemed to regret the licensed brothels but he accepted the substitution of cafés, restaurants, etc., which have become closed clubs. He also said that there was a difference between "these women" and "otherwise respectable men who perhaps are drunk after a dinner" and go with them. Such statements defy comment.

There has been a great hue and cry over the condition of the London streets today. "There is," said Earl Winterton, "some exaggeration in the statement that they are worse today than they were forty years ago, or that they are worse than those in some other countries." Lord Kilmuir, the Lord Chancellor, indicated "the general lines upon which the Government are thinking." They recognise the danger of "sweeping the dirt under the carpet" but government being "the art of the possible," that is the best they can do. He quoted the criticisms we have already noted and was obviously more conscious than some of the difficulties and dangers that lie before the Government, including the danger of acting unjustly. The Government are evidently ready to consider improvements in the law on certain points—perhaps Earl Winterton's warning may have its effect. He said: "It would be so easy to pass a law, which however unpleasant and disgraceful a vice prostitution is, would be unjust and contrary to the English conception of justice; and I hope that Her Majesty's Government will proceed with great caution." Better, we would say, no law than one which is unjust.

The Forty-seventh Annual Meeting of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance will be held on Saturday, March 15th, at 2.30 p.m. Nominations for committee and resolutions for the agenda must reach the secretary not later than February 7th. Nominations must be duly proposed and seconded and the consent of the candidate obtained.

Letter to the Home Secretary

To the Rt. Hon. R. A. Butler, C.H., M.P.,
Secretary of State for the Home Department,
9th January, 1958.

Dear Sir,

My Committee has given careful consideration to the Wolfenden Report and wishes to send you the following observations on Part Three—Prostitution.

St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance has consistently, over a period of years, pressed 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.

In the light of the Wolfenden Report, the Alliance sees no reason to alter its demand.

The Alliance is in agreement with the General Considerations (Chapter VIII of the Report).

The Alliance dissents strongly from the assumption that "clearing the streets" should be the primary consideration (par. 249). The matter is not solved by driving the trade underground and we view with astonishment the complacent acceptance by the Committee of the probability that the clearing of the streets will result in a closer organisation of the trade. "We think it possible, indeed probable, that there will be an extension of the 'call-girl' system and perhaps a growth in the activities of touts." Also "an increase in small advertisements . . . offering services of 'masseuses', models' or 'companions'." (286)

The Alliance records its astonishment that the Committee "does not feel able to make any positive recommendation" regarding "the increasingly prevalent form of solicitation by men of women, commonly described as kerb-crawling." (267)

It believes, with Lord Winterton (House of Lords Debate, December 4th) that it is an exaggeration to state that "the streets of London are worse today than they were forty years ago . . . in regard to the number of prostitutes, the streets of London were in many respects worse in the 1900s and certainly worse at an earlier period."

The Alliance is opposed to the elimination of the requirement to establish annoyance. (251-256) It considers this to be unjust and believes that this omission puts undue power into the hands of the police.

The Alliance opposes and resents the designation of a woman as a "common prostitute," a term which is nowhere defined by law and which, contrary to British principles of justice, discriminates between categories of citizens, setting certain citizens in a class apart. (258-262)

Needless to say, the Alliance agrees with the Committee's rejection of licensed houses (232) and also in general with the recommendations regarding landlords and occupiers of property for immoral purposes. (326-335) It approves the recommendation of the three members of the Committee with regard to the increased maximum penalty for living on the earnings of prostitution. (Reservation V.)

The Alliance is at a loss to understand why research into the motives animating the male customer is not suggested equally with research on motives which drive women into this mode of life. (297)

The Alliance wholeheartedly supports the Committee's statement on Women Police and believes that the use of women police as stated in paragraph 273 would be of inestimable value.

We trust that these observations will have your earnest consideration.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

F. MACKENZIE SHATTOCK, M.D., D.P.M.

Chairman,

St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance.

Notes and Comments

The Life Peerages Bill, for the creation of life peers, both men and women, was given an unopposed Second Reading in the House of Lords on December 4th. During the debate, Lord Hailsham recalled the case of Lady Rhondda in 1922 on which *The Catholic Citizen* of that year commented: "We were both sorry and indignant to read of the defeat of Lady Rhondda's claim to take her seat in the House of Lords . . . If peeresses in their own right are prevented by the House of Lords from taking their seats, we do not think they can prevent it for long." That was thirty-five years ago and still the hereditary peeresses are to be excluded from the Bill. During the Committee stage, Lord Mansfield called it an "unjustifiable anomaly" to permit the introduction of women life peers "without regularising the position of women who succeeded to hereditary peerages, and who, but for the accident of sex, would be sitting in the House of Lords."

The debate on Lord Airlie's Amendment to bar women as life peers, brought back old memories of the debates on woman suffrage with their hoary prejudices and flippancies. Lord Chatfield and others, however, stressed the absurdity of excluding half the population as unfit to sit in the House of Lords. We are glad to put on record Lord Salisbury's reply to some of the cheap remarks. He said that some of the greatest sovereigns of modern times, and some of the greatest of our scientists and writers had been women. "On what ground do we take the attitude that women are intellectually inferior to men? If we are going to have an intellectual qualification for membership of either Houses of Parliament, a great many of us would be in a rocky condition . . . This is not a club. It is a place for legislation . . . on what grounds do we, a legislative Chamber, exclude women from considering the measures which affect them as much as they affect men?" Lord Home, Leader of the House, said the purpose of the Bill was to strengthen the House and enable it to work better. Women have taken an active and useful part over a wide range of national activities and their practical knowledge would be of great value. It was surely time they were in the House of Lords. Lord Airlie's Amendment was defeated by 134 votes to 30, a Government majority of 104.

In reply to a question from Mrs. Emmet, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Ormsby-Gore, on November 27th said that "the main reason" for the inability of the United Kingdom to adhere to the Convention on the Political Rights of Women was "the absence of a Territorial Application Article." Mrs. Emmet further said: "I understand the difficulty is the position of

women in some of our Colonial Territories. Would it be possible for my right hon. Friend to see how far that difficulty is as great as it was and consult the Colonial Secretary to see whether steps could be taken to bring those conditions into such a state that we can now sign the Convention?" The Minister replied: "I am sure it is my right hon. Friend's intention to try to bring about that state of affairs. He has consulted the Colonial Territories concerned, but it would be quite wrong in present circumstances for the Government to undertake this obligation when the conditions in those Territories do not conform with this Convention."

We offer our congratulations to Miss Ruth Tomlinson on her appointment as United Kingdom delegate to the Twelfth Session of the Status of Women Commission which will be held in Geneva beginning March 17th, 1958.

We would again ask our correspondents to note our new address: St. Joan's Alliance, 8b Dryden Chambers, 119 Oxford Street, London, W.1. Letters are still being addressed to 55 Berners Street, where the building is demolished. Please note also that it is essential to include the name of the Alliance in the address.

AND WHAT ABOUT THE HUSBAND?

Extract from letter in *The Catholic Herald*
27th December, 1957

In every contract, including the marriage contract, there must be two sides to the bargain. "Wives must obey their husbands," says St. Paul, but also: "A husband ought to love his wife as if she were his own body."

I must now ask whether any man would consider it right for "his own body" to toil almost unremittently from about seven o'clock in the morning until late in the evening, as many Catholic mothers of large families are forced to do, unless their husbands give them some substantial help.

I have seen a Catholic mother struggling to bath and bed a family of seven young children, while her husband, tired no doubt after a day at the office, which could hardly have been as strenuous as hers at home, took his ease at the fireside. This kind of situation seems taken for granted in most Catholic homes which I have come across.

If, therefore, he does *not* cherish her as he does his own body, a husband cannot, in all conscience, expect his wife, in her turn, to render him obedience, though perhaps, in her humility and self-surrender, she may still be willing to do so. If he *does* obey the Apostle's injunction (which involves him in tremendous responsibilities and obligations), then his wife should gladly keep her side of the bargain by offering her husband a degree of reasoned obedience.

Incidentally, is there too much said, or implied, about the duties of Catholic wives, and too little about the duties of husbands?
Pamela Willoughby-Thomas

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AND

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Signed articles do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Society

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African Safari

A most enjoyable meeting of the Alliance was held at 14a Ashley Gardens, London, on December 8th at the invitation of Dame Vera Laughton Mathews, who outlined to the thirty or so members present some of the highlights of her recent visit to East Africa.

On her way by air to visit her son David, who is a District Officer at Tukuuyu, in Tanganyika, Dame Vera spent a few days in Nairobi, Kenya. There she was able to see some of the valuable social work that is being done through the medium of women's clubs, girl guides and community centres. Although the white settlers in Kenya had a great sense of duty towards the Africans, she felt their attitude savoured of the "Lady Bountiful." She also said that it made her very sad to see the women of the Kikuyu tribe carrying huge loads on their backs supported by a band round the forehead—a practice incompatible with good posture and one which led to various physical defects.

Later, Dame Vera flew on to Tanganyika. She described the warm reception she received from the African inhabitants of Tukuuyu during the weeks she spent there. She devoted her time to seeing the schools, hospitals, women's clubs, etc., the leper settlement and various missions. Her son's work comprises such varied responsibilities as acting as magistrate, coroner, census officer, so that she had plenty of opportunity of obtaining an insight into many aspects of African life.

The Nyakusa tribe in Tukuuyu is advanced and intelligent, progress has been very rapid during the last ten years. There is a good rainfall in the area, so crops are good, and the people do not have to carry water more than a mile or so; whereas in some parts of Tanganyika they have to carry water as much as fourteen miles, and the women spend one-third of their lives carrying water. Water and other loads, such as bundles of firewood, are carried by the women on the head, and they have a very graceful carriage.

Education has made a great advance during the last ten years. There are three different stages of schools. Primary schools—standards one to four; middle school—standards four to eight; and secondary school—standards eight to twelve. Standard twelve is school certificate, but only a small number achieve that. Very few stay at school beyond standard eight, which gives them an almost similar status to school certificate in this country—that is to say, standard eight education ensures a good clerical job and few aspire to anything higher.

Until recently, parents could not see any need for girls to be educated. They are now accepting the idea; but schools cannot be built fast enough. There is also a crying need for more and better teachers. Teachers in primary schools only have standard eight qualification (that is four years below school certificate) followed by two years of teachers' training. In Kenya and Uganda, education is more advanced. There is one African university for the three countries in British East Africa, Makerere University in Uganda. Education is not compulsory and a small fee (about £1 a term for primary school and more at other levels) is charged.

An interesting feature in the Tukuuyu district is that the coffee plantations are all owned by Africans who are therefore comparatively well-to-do. The women cultivate the soil after the heavy work of breaking up the ground has been done by the men. The agricultural officers who visit the districts, giving advice, unfortunately only talk to the men, and the women who do the planting and tending the trees and harvesting do not get the benefit of instruction at first hand. Dame Vera also said that it was a pity the women did not work in European homes as the men do, as this would help them to improve their own homes and live in a less primitive style.

Their huts are built of bamboo, rarely with windows as they are used for sleeping, cooking and eating; social intercourse is held out of doors.

Each hut has its own land sufficient for the household to grow maize and bananas for its own needs, and keep hens. They obtain money by selling their coffee in the local market. Some also cultivate groundnuts, pyrethrum and maize for sale. They cook with wood, and use kerosene lamps for lighting.

Their primitive state was in the past largely due to climatic reasons; the East Africans had been the victims of famine, drought and disease, and the Arab slave trade had also prevented them coming in contact with the more advanced civilisations. Now they are pathetically eager to learn, the women as well as the men.

The Native Courts administer the law except for offences of moral turpitude, i.e. murder and manslaughter. Most of the cases are connected with divorce or the bride price. Divorce is rife and a great problem. If the bride price is not paid, a father can divorce his daughter. Adultery by the wife is ground for divorce. The bride price is about £100 and many young men go away to the Rhodesian copper mines to earn money towards it. Girls marry at about eighteen to twenty years.

Forced marriage was not a problem in this tribe, though it was in some parts. In Tukuuyu it was forbidden by native law, though if the bride price had already been paid, the daughter would be required by her father to find another husband who would pay it back.

Female circumcision was not practised in the Nyakusa tribe, but in some tribes in Tanganyika, and also in Kenya, it was a hundred per cent. the custom.

Among native customs, Dame Vera instanced that which forbade a girl looking her father-in-law in the face; if she met him in the street, she knelt and covered her face. Transgression of this custom was formerly a punishable offence, but in Tukuuyu this is no longer so. In contrast to these ancient customs, Dame Vera instanced her visit to the house of a Catholic African of the middle classes whose wife sat down to dinner with the guests and where the male guests assisted in clearing the table.

There is a nurses' training school in Tukuuyu, the only one at present in Tanganyika. Women's clubs to teach the domestic arts—cooking, sewing, child care, are developing, and the weekly meetings are held under African club leaders. European women act as social development officers to supervise the work of these clubs.

Finally, Dame Vera outlined the system of local and central government and the principles on which appointments are made to the Legislative Council. The first elections to this Council will be held in 1958. Each province will elect three members: a European, an African, and an Asian, and electors must vote for candidates of all three

racers. The electoral qualification will be the same for men and women, but the number of women qualified will not be great. Women are not eligible to vote or to stand for election to the rural or district councils.

Dame Vera concluded by emphasising how much she had been encouraged by the attitude of the young men in the Government service, they looked on the Africans "just as people—some good, some bad, some intelligent, some stupid."

Margaret C. Clarke

REVIEW

These Made Peace. Studies of the Saints and Blessed of the Third Order of St. Francis. By Cecily Hallack and Peter F. Anson. (Burns Oates, 30s.)

At her death, Cecily Hallack left unfinished a large number of short biographies of the saints and beatified of the Franciscan Third Order. With the intention of a finished study Peter Anson undertook the arduous task of completion and revision, but it was long before the book could be published, and before that, further revision was undertaken by the eminent scholar Fr. Marion A. Habig, O.F.M.

The result is a combination of scholarship and charm which makes it hard to put down this book. Each section is introduced by a short historical sketch of the period covered and these "background pieces" plunge the reader into the atmosphere and make it easier to understand the Saints and Beati considered. There are admirable studies of such well-known personages as St. Rose of Viterbo, St. Louis IX, King of France, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, St. Elizabeth, Queen of Portugal, and nearer our own time, St. Joseph Cottolengo. . . . The list is endless and the lesser-known names fill one with astonishment at the sheer amount of holiness thrown up by the Third Order of St. Francis of Assisi, otherwise known as the Order of Penance.

But what I chiefly commend in this book is its power of lifting the curtain on to the stage of other centuries where these holy lives were enacted. The curtain falls but in the twentieth century the Third Order still remains.

C.M.L.S.

Members' subscriptions are now due (£1, which includes *The Catholic Citizen*). It would be of real service to the Alliance if these were sent in promptly. Apart from the time and expense involved in sending repeated individual reminders, the money is required to meet the day-to-day expenses of the office.

THE MONTH IN PARLIAMENT

For our readers, the most important measure discussed has been the **Maintenance Orders Bill**. On December 12th, the Home Secretary, in moving the Second Reading explained the terms of the Bill which enables maintenance orders made in a Magistrate's Court to be enforceable in the High Court or County Court and introduces a new method of enforcement by which the Court can make an order for the employer to make a deduction from the man's salary or wages. At present, something approaching 5,000 men are sent to prison every year for failure to keep up payments under maintenance orders. This, he said, was not only futile but positively harmful. It got no money for the woman, lost the man his job and the country his productive capacity, besides exposing the man to the contamination of prison and spending a considerable amount of public money. He emphasised that there was no intention of extending attachment of wages to such matters as civil debt, hire-purchase agreements, or fines, categorically stating: "It is not the intention of the Government to extend attachment to any of these things or to any other purpose."

Mr. Butler mentioned by name the many organisations, including St. Joan's Alliance, who were supporting the Bill. He explained that an attachment of earnings would only be enforceable if payments under the maintenance order were in arrears to the extent of four weekly payments. The normal deduction rate would be the rate at which the Court thought the man's earnings should be applied and would have regard to the man's resources and needs and the needs of persons for whom he must provide. If the man had a second family the Court must have regard to the needs of that family as well as to those of the beneficiary under the maintenance order. Doubts had been expressed by both employers and Trade Unionists who were anxious not to be drawn into the domestic affairs of the men, but the Bill would be drafted so that the employers would be put to a minimum of trouble. The employer would pay the money to an officer of the Court and not to the wife. If a man did not want his employer to know that there was a maintenance order against him, he could ensure that no attachment order was made, by making regular payments.

Mr. Greenwood said that there were deep divisions on these proposals on both sides of the House but, though the Opposition did not like the principle of attachment, they would not oppose the Second Reading.

Miss Vickers, who had introduced the original Bill before it was adopted by the Government, said that quite a number of men as well as women would be pleased with the Bill. Many men had written

to her, asking what they could do to make voluntary arrangements with their employers though the Bill dealt only with defaulters. She pointed out that it was not only the weekly wage-earner that was concerned, and cited a case of a man earning £2,000 a year with a pension of £400 a year from his old firm, who owed his wife for nine years maintenance. She repeated that the Bill was a preventive measure and would come into operation only as regards defaulters.

Mr. David Jones thought that to avoid the attachment order, men would change their jobs and that employers might dismiss men rather than take the trouble of deducting varying amounts week by week.

Mr. Pannell said that the inviolability of the pay packet was already breached by P.A.Y.E. and social insurance, and he would put the needs of the women and children above the needs of the Income Tax man.

Mr. Parker reminded Mr. Greenwood that if a man went to gaol it caused far more trouble between himself and his employer than would be likely under this Bill. He could not understand why merchant seamen were left out of the Bill. He realised the difficulty of including self-employed men and he would have liked an addition to the Bill to the effect that if a man went to prison it did not cancel the debt.

Mrs. Jeger said the debate reminded her of the days when they were struggling for equal pay and it was said by opponents that men had to keep their families and, consequently, should receive more than women. Those who put forward that theory should be consistent and look upon the man's wage as the family wage; as a pool upon which the whole of the family had a right to draw.

Mr. Alfred Robens, while supporting the Bill, mentioned the objection of the Trades Union Congress to the Bill, which did not wish to see a break in the 1870 Act which made wages inviolate. The British Employers Federation did not want employers to accept responsibility for a matter which they regarded as outside their employment responsibilities. Mr. Robens asked if the deductions could not be made under the P.A.Y.E. system.

Mr. Simon, Joint Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department, replying, said that this had been considered but found to have insuperable objections, but he would look into the matter again before the Committee stage.

Now, that the Bill has passed its Second Reading, it will go to a Standing Committee.

P. M. Brandt

INTERNATIONAL NOTES

Australia

New South Wales. We congratulate Miss Aline Fenwick, a member of St. Joan's Alliance in Sydney, on her appointment to the Parliamentary Draftsman's office in Canberra, the only woman among thirteen draftsmen. They prepare all Bills for the Federal Parliament, all delegated legislation, proclamations and all the legislation for the Australian Territories. Miss Fenwick and one other woman are the first and so far only women in the Attorney General's Department which uses the services of some two hundred lawyers.

Mrs. Jean Daly now contributes a weekly column, entitled "Things that Matter" for the *Catholic Weekly* (Sydney). In her first article, to the question "For how much longer are women going to sit back in their homes and watch the world changing for the worse without raising their hands and voices in protest?" she answers "Until they make themselves better informed on what is really happening in high places at home and abroad." We congratulate Mrs. Daly and the *Catholic Weekly*.

Victoria. We ask the prayers of our members for Miss Janet Mitchell, a member of St. Joan's, who died recently in Melbourne. She was the only woman journalist to go to Mukden and Harbin when Japanese troops were annexing Manchuria. Since 1940, until her retirement in 1955, she was attached to the educational department of the Australian Broadcasting Commission in Victoria.

Miss Mitchell gave an address to St. Joan's Alliance at the first Australian Conference held in Melbourne in 1954, stressing the "duty of Catholic women to get to know men and women of good will who are working for a better state and to realise what contribution they can make to it. . . . They must stand four-square on the basis of Christian morality, and must be vocal about every type of social injustice." R.I.P.

Belgian Congo. On December 8th, Europeans and Africans elected councillors for the eleven newly established communes of Leopoldville which are intended to integrate the administration of the hitherto separate African and European districts. Out of a total population of 350,000, 46,000 literate Africans (men only) were eligible to vote.

Germany. The first woman Secretary of State, Dr. Gabriele Wuelker, has been appointed to the Ministry for Family and Youth Affairs. Dr. Wuelker has acted as interpreter to the American occupation forces and was their consultant on refugee problems. State Secretaries in Germany are similar to Permanent Under Secretaries in this country but wield more power.

I.L.O. Miss Katherine Natzio has been appointed Counsellor of Relations Division of the I.L.O. She is the first woman to reach the grade of Counsellor in the International Labour Office.

South Africa. In response to a request from the National Council of Women, the Minister of Justice has agreed that women should serve as assessors on the bench in cases involving women or persons under the age of eighteen. The N.C.W. is preparing lists of suitably trained women for the use of each Judge-President.

Spain. A series of lectures on Women's Rights is being given in the College of Lawyers in Madrid. Senor Manuel Gallego Morell, professor at the Central University, gave the opening lecture under the presidency of the Lord Chief Justice, the Presidents of the High Court and other distinguished personalities being present.

The speaker said that recent reforms in the legal system have constituted a great forward step in the recognition of the lawful claims of Spanish women. Regulations, he said, must also be altered to make way for new aptitudes. He advised caution, but mentioned one necessary reform—to give women an age of majority, comparable with that of men; not, of course, equal "since the marital authority is beyond discussion."

Turkey. There are seven women deputies in the Turkish National Assembly; two are lawyers, one writer, one archaeologist, one teacher, one municipal councillor and one social worker.

U.S.A. A minimum age of marriage of fifteen for girls and seventeen for boys has been laid down in the law recently passed by the Mississippi State Legislature. Formerly, marriages of girls of ten and eleven years, often to men old enough to be their grandfathers, have been common.

MERSEYSIDE BRANCH

A very successful meeting was held in December at the home, in Princes Park, Liverpool, of Mrs. McCann, chairman of the Merseyside Branch, when Miss Herbison, a member of the committee, gave an interesting and vivid account of the Conferences she had recently attended in Rome. At the Conference of the World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations, she was one of the delegates who presented to the Holy Father the statue of Blessed Margaret Clitheroe expressing the wish for her canonisation. The Holy Father asked the delegates to write to him about her.

Miss Herbison was also a delegate, appointed

by Archbishop Godfrey to the Conference of the Lay Apostolate. Hearty congratulations were accorded to Miss Herbison on her election as National President of the Catholic Women's League.

A resolution on the Wolfenden Report was passed asking for the repeal of the present unjust solicitation laws and the substitution of a general law against annoyance or molestation under which the evidence of the person annoyed would be necessary in order to obtain a conviction. The resolution has been sent to the Home Secretary and the local M.Ps. A talk on the Wolfenden Report will be given to the Standing Conference of Women's Organisations in Liverpool in January by Mr. Lyon Blease. The beautiful historic banner of The Catholic Women's Suffrage Society was on show at the meeting and was greatly admired; also the first bound volume of *The Catholic Suffragist* (1915) with the opening article by Alice Meynell.

The next meeting of the Branch will be held towards the end of January and will be addressed by a speaker from the Travellers Aid Society.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

From "*The Catholic Citizen*," January 15th, 1933.

The *Schweizer Frauenblatt* gives an account of a lecture and discussion organised by the Swiss Mercantile Association, at which Herr Schimpf spoke on "Women's Work And The Crisis" and paid warm tribute to the value of their work. His praise was welcomed by the crowded audience, and the following resolution was adopted: "That whereas the Constitution lays down the principle of equal rights and freedom in all trades and professions, this right shall not be limited by restrictions on women's work. As a method of combating unemployment such restriction should be repudiated because it is unjust and retrogressive, and because it would not in practice achieve the desired result."

It is refreshing to find this common sense and just point of view being put forward by business men, at a time when much nonsense is being talked about driving women from the labour market to lessen unemployment among men.—*International Notes*.

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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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