

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

Status of Women Commission

The Twelfth Session of the Status of Women Commission opened at Geneva on March 17th. Only eight of the twenty delegates had served on the Commission before, but these included those experienced feminists, Miss Mañas (Cuba), Miss Bernardino (Dominican Republic) and Madame Lefauchoux (France).

The Begum Anwar Ahmed (Pakistan) presided with grace and firmness and she was supported by the brilliant and efficient Secretary to the Commission, Mrs. Grinberg-Vinaver. Mrs. Tenison Woods represented the Secretary-General and her wise and exactly informed interventions were listened to with more than usual respect as it was known that she would be heard no more, at least in this capacity, at the Commission's meetings.

St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance was represented by Mademoiselle Archinard and Miss P. C. Challoner (who arrived on the morning of March 20th just as the debate on the Political Rights of Women was coming to an end). The Resolution, which was passed unanimously, stressed the importance of the access of women to public office and functions. In this connection reports on the Status of Women in Trust Territories and in non-self-governing Territories were discussed.

The Commission also discussed the report prepared by UNESCO in collaboration with the International Federation of University Women concerning the access of women to higher education. The opinion was repeatedly expressed that great advantages could be derived by the community, the family and the individual from utilising women's abilities and intellectual capacities to the fullest extent.

The Commission then considered item 5—Status of Women in Private Law—the subject in which St. Joan's International Alliance was particularly concerned. The Commission had before it the Report of the Secretary-General on "Consent to Marriage and Age of Marriage" which was the study recommended by the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Abolition of Slavery and en-

trusted by ECOSOC to the Status of Women Commission. This Report fully confirmed the opinion formed by the Alliance that it was not in tropical or semi-tropical countries that the age of marriage was lowest but that many "civilised" countries were still satisfied with a minimum marriage age for girls of twelve. The Memorandum submitted by the Alliance to the Commission asking for a universal minimum legal age of marriage of not less than sixteen years is published on page 36 of this issue.

The final resolution (the text of which will be found at the end of this article) was indeed a triumph. It was passed by thirteen votes in favour (including the United Kingdom). There was one vote against, and fourteen abstentions.

It was during this debate that the Polish delegate expressed the prevailing feeling when she said "the children of the world have a right to their childhood." The representative of St. Joan's International Alliance, Miss Challoner, intervening, begged the Commission to take action even of a revolutionary nature to ensure that the slow process of education was hastened by law. She said that certain African tribes were already abolishing customs adversely affecting women and girls and instanced the recent vote in favour of abolishing the bride-price by the new Council of Chiefs in Urundi.

As an example of legal action, she mentioned that female circumcision was forbidden by the penal code of Kenya. This last statement led to a discussion of this subject, which as the United Kingdom delegate pointed out, had first been brought before the Commission in 1952 (by St. Joan's International Alliance.) The following morning a closed session was held at which the representative of the World Health Organization was invited to be present. A resolution was passed without comment or dissent on March 25th, asking ECOSOC to "request the World Health Organization to undertake an inquiry into the persistence of customs consisting in subjecting girls to ritual operations, and into the measures adopted or

planned for putting a stop to such practices," and "to communicate the results of the inquiry to the Commission on the Status of Women before the end of 1959, for examination at its fourteenth session."

Meanwhile discussion had begun on item 6 on the Agenda — "Economic Opportunities for Women, Working Women, Including Working Mothers, with Family Responsibilities," which led to a succession of descriptions of the amenities with which working mothers are supplied by their respective Governments. The representative of St. Joan's Alliance ventured to say that these considerations (of amenities) were primarily the concern of the Social Commission and not of the Commission on the Status of Women. She urged the Commission to consider that women should not be forced by economic necessity or Government pressure, or tempted by bribes, to undertake paid work outside the home, but that they should be free to arrange with their husbands the organisation of their lives. As Madame Lefauchaux pointed out in the debate, privileges are always paid for. The final resolution while expressing the concern of the Status of Women Commission on this subject suggested that the Social Commission and the Specialised Agencies could contribute towards defining problems and suggesting solutions.

The remaining sessions were given to discussions on the Age of Retirement which it was generally agreed should be the same for men and women; to Equal Pay and Technical Assistance and to various reports. On the periodicity of the sessions of the Commission it was agreed that annual meetings should be held at least while there was so much to do.

As the representative of the Commission on the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination, Madame Lefauchaux pointed out that the proposed I.L.O. Convention on Discrimination in Employment—Article 6—would exclude the question of Equal Pay as it was already the subject of a separate Convention. This, she said must be taken up with the I.L.O. as unequal pay is a basic discrimination in employment.

A very happy relationship established itself between the members of the Commission and of the non-governmental organizations who took part in the discussions, and St. Joan's International Alliance, for one, would like to put its appreciation on record.

It would not be right to end this rapid and cursory survey without a special word of gratitude to Mrs. Tenison-Woods, Director of the Section on the Status of Women, who for eight years, has guided the Commission with a knowledge, tolerance and simplicity which has impressed all who have taken part in its deliberations and made her beloved among her colleagues, building up a tradition which will live after her.

WOMEN IN THE LABOUR FORCE

This pamphlet, published by the International Labour Office gives statistical information on the composition and characteristics of the female labour force throughout the world, illustrating the "notable change in the characteristics of their participation in economic activity." It is a study of considerable value but it makes no claim to be complete or to warrant the drawing of general conclusions from data which is so dependent on differing cultures and standards and in many cases so hard to obtain.

An outstanding recent development is the extensive employment of married women in paid work, in "economically advanced" countries, but women predominantly engaged in housework in their own homes and other "family workers" in shops, handicrafts and farms "are not counted in the total work force", as not coming within the definition of the economically active population which produces the goods and services and is paid for them.

An interesting table gives the percentage distribution of the female labour force by *status*, i.e. as self-employed, unpaid family worker and employees (wage-earners and salaried employees), though comparisons are not exact as the definitions of these categories vary appreciably from one country to another. In countries "where the vast majority of working women are engaged in agriculture, self-employed and unpaid family workers combined tend to reach equally high proportions", while, in industrialised countries the employee group comprises the bulk of the women at work. In India, for example, unpaid family workers are (Census of 1951) 59.8% and employees 14%, while in Great Britain unpaid family workers are 6% and employees 94.9%.

In the Table, giving the number of married women in the labour force, it is worth noting that in those industrialised countries where statistics are available, the number of single women employed is generally two or three times as high as the number of married women—a fact that deserves to be noted as the interests and responsibilities of single women workers sometimes tend to be overlooked.

P.C.C.

United Nations Conventions. The Convention on the Political Rights of Women has been signed by forty-one States and ratified or acceded to by twenty-nine, the latest being Haiti. The Convention on the Nationality of Married Women has been signed by twenty-two States and ratified by five—Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ireland, Israel, United Kingdom. One more ratification is required before this Convention will come into force. The Convention on Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value has been ratified by twenty-four States.

Notes and Comments

On St. Joan's Day, Friday, May 30th, Mass will be offered for the intentions of the Alliance by the kindness of the Very Rev. Canon T. J. FitzGerald.

Members are asked to attend the 6 o'clock evening Mass at Westminster Cathedral and to gather at St. Joan's Shrine afterwards.

According to tradition a wreath, tied with the colours of the Alliance, will be laid on the shrine.

It is suggested that some members may like to go on to a nearby restaurant for dinner together.

* * *

The Fifteenth Council Meeting of St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance, to be held in Brussels on Saturday and Sunday, September 27th and 28th, promises to be of unusual interest. The business meetings will be held at the headquarters of the Auxiliaries Feminines Internationales Catholiques, rue Gachard. On the Sunday evening, September 28th, by kind invitation of Mademoiselle Baetens, delegates will have the pleasure of meeting some of Belgium's distinguished women. In the afternoon of Monday, September 29th, in the Missionary section of the Exhibition, a meeting is being arranged with the Catholic African women from the Congo, who have come to Brussels for the Exhibition.

There will be plenty of opportunity for visits to the Exhibition.

Members wishing to attend the Council Meeting should notify the Hon. Secretary of St. Joan's International Alliance, 8^B, Dryden Chambers, 119, Oxford Street, London, W.1, as soon as possible.

* * *

A very successful supper meeting was held by St. Joan's Alliance, jointly with the Women's Freedom League, at the Minerva Club, on Tuesday, April 22nd, when Miss Challoner gave an account of her visit to Geneva to attend the Twelfth Session of the Status of Women Commission. The gist of the talk will be found in our front page article. Miss Reeves, President of the Women's Freedom League, presided and we are indebted to her for her generous hospitality.

Thanks were expressed by Dr. Shattock and carried by acclamation to Miss Reeves and to the speaker for a very delightful evening.

* * *

The Women's Freedom League will hold a supper meeting on Wednesday, May 21st at 6.30 p.m. at the Minerva Club, at which Lord Pethick-Lawrence will speak on his recent visit to India and Pakistan. Tickets 3/6 including buffet supper.

The Royal Assent was given to the Life Peerages Bill on April 30th. The first list of life peers will not be announced until after the Birthday Honours.

* * *

The Maintenance Orders Bill passed its Second Reading in the House of Lords on April 16th. The Lord Chancellor, Viscount Kilmuir, stated that amendments to the Bill were being prepared which would provide that imprisonment should not wipe out arrears under a maintenance order; and as a consequence, the maximum period of imprisonment for disobeying an order would be reduced from three months to six weeks.

* * *

By the death of Margery Fry, on April 21st., the cause of Penal Reform has suffered a great loss. Penal Reform was always her chief work but she was interested in many other causes. In 1898 she became Librarian at Somerville College and six years later was warden of University House, Birmingham, until the first World War, during which she worked in France with the Quakers' War Victims Relief Mission. After the war she became the Hon. Secretary of the Penal Reform League, which she united with the Howard Association. For five years she was Principal of Somerville College and was then sent on a mission to China to establish good relations between English and Chinese universities. She was a Governor of the B.B.C. from 1937 to 1939 and a member of the Treasury Grants Committee from 1919 to 1948. Later she was a member of the Home Office Advisory Committee on the Treatment of Offenders and also of the University Grants Committee. It was largely owing to her efforts that the question of penal reform was placed on the Agenda of the League of Nations and that the United Nations now have an organisation dealing with the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders.

HON. TREASURER'S NOTE

As members know, subscriptions for 1958 were due on January 1st. If you have not already paid your subscription will you please send it (minimum £1, which includes *The Catholic Citizen*) as soon as possible and so save time and trouble in the office.

Please note that in future unless a stamped addressed envelope is sent, receipts for subscriptions will be enclosed with the next issue of *The Catholic Citizen*.

May we again remind members that, when writing to the office, it is essential to include the name of the Alliance in the address, as we occupy only one room in a large building.

N. K. Carr

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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Status of Women in Private Law

Statement* submitted to the Twelfth Session of the Status of Women Commission by St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance, a non-governmental organisation on the Register of the Secretary-General of the United Nations

St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance welcomes the resolution passed by the Status of Women Commission and adopted by the Economic and Social Council on July 24th, 1957, recommending (a) a system of compulsory registration of marriages and (b) a system whereby prospective spouses in a marriage themselves express their consent freely, in the presence of a competent civil or religious authority.

The Alliance trusts that States Members of the United Nations will not delay in putting these measures into effect.

The Alliance notes that, at the Eleventh session of the Status of Women Commission, in the discussion on marriage customs (under the item—Status of Women in Private Law) fears were expressed that the necessity for caution would be overlooked, and furthermore, that time was demanded for evolutionary processes and educational measures to take effect. The view of the Alliance is that as time does not stand still, too much caution means leaving countless children to suffer; in any case, the fight against tradition and custom is by its very nature slow and even after laws are passed, they will be brave young people who will take advantage of them.

On the other hand, in view of the rapidity with which many of the countries where these practices exist are achieving independence it is of the utmost importance to have safeguards for the status and rights of women embodied in the law so that national pride may ensure their continuance instead of seeking to uphold tradition.

The system of registration of marriages will not of itself do away with forced marriages or the pres-

* United Nations. Economic and Social Council E/CN.6/NGO/48.

sure of the tribe, but if the parties to a marriage express their free consent *personally* before a properly accredited witness, and are made to understand that they have the protection of the law if they exercise their right of choice, this is a step in the right direction.

By the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, States Parties undertook to prescribe suitable ages of marriage and a Recommendation to the Economic and Social Council "to initiate a study of the question of marriage, with the object of drawing attention to the desirability of free consent of both parties to a marriage and of the establishment of a minimum age for marriage, preferably of not less than fourteen years," was added to the Convention.

The Alliance knowing the concern of the Status of Women Commission on this subject welcomes the fact that the Economic and Social Council entrusted this study to the Commission, and is further gratified at the speed with which the Secretary-General has prepared the Report which the Commission now has before it.

The Alliance would reiterate its demand for the establishment of a universal minimum age of marriage.

In a Statement submitted to the Commission at its eleventh session (E/CN.6/NGO.44 and Corr. 1) St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance asked for a minimum age of marriage of not less than fourteen years, and again at the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery. Two years ago, the Alliance scarcely dared to suggest a higher age than fourteen years. Since then, however, at its Council Meeting held in Paris in September, 1957, the Alliance after careful consideration,

decided to propose the age of sixteen and the following resolution was passed:

"Believing that there should be a universal legal age of marriage for girls and boys of not less than sixteen years, St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance urges all States to promote legislation to this end."

This resolution receives support from the Secretary-General's Report on Consent to Marriage and Age of Marriage (E/CN.6/317) which would seem to refute the argument that in certain countries where girls mature early, the marriage age should be correspondingly low. The very countries whose climate was used as an excuse for being content with a lower marriage age are now in the forefront of progress. There are twenty-three countries listed in the Annex to the Report whose marriage age for girls is *over* the age of sixteen (the age for boys is nearly always higher) and these include Brazil, Ethiopia, Peru, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Tonga; there are thirty where the marriage age is sixteen and these include Cambodia, China, Egypt, Hong Kong, Japan, Nigeria (Eastern) and Zanzibar.

On the other hand there are ninety-four countries where the marriage age is under fifteen, of which thirty-seven still have a legal marriage age for girls of twelve years. These are not primarily tropical or semi-tropical countries, but include three of the States of Australia, Ireland, Newfoundland, Quebec, Spain and four States of the United States of America.

In some States the age of marriage, fourteen for boys and twelve for girls, is ostensibly based on Canon Law. But Canon Law was amended in 1918 and the new code no longer recognizes the marriage of a boy under sixteen or a girl under fourteen. The enactment adds: "the pastor of souls should dissuade young people from marriage at an earlier age than is commonly the custom in the respective countries." (Canon 1067).

It is obvious that girls of twelve to fourteen years, however developed they may be physically, are not mentally and spiritually mature enough to marry. They are more easily beguiled into marriage at so young an age and cannot know their own minds. Such a young girl may be mature physically but not psychologically; she remains a child always in the eyes of her husband, and is prevented from developing into a real partner.

FOR SALE. A table and four dining-room chairs. Also gas-cooker. Parkinson Pearl, four burners, almost new. Box 7, St. Joan's Alliance.

WANTED. Good solid small wooden chest also chest of drawers. Box 5, St. Joan's Alliance.

STAMPS. Packets of 25 foreign stamps for 3d.; 50 for 6d. St. Joan's Alliance.

MARRIAGE LAWS

Resolution adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its Twelfth Session, 1958

The Commission on the Status of Women

Recalling article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, resolution 843 (IX) of the General Assembly and resolution 652 G (XXIV) of the Economic and Social Council, as well as Article 2 of the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices similar to Slavery.

Having considered the report by the Secretary-General on the consent to marriage and age of marriage (E/CN.6/317 and Add. 1) and having noted that, in his introduction to that report, the Secretary-General states that the sources of information which were at his disposal were not exhaustive;

Believing that further information in this field will prove helpful to assure protection for women and the family;

Recommends that the Economic and Social Council adopt the following resolution:

The Economic and Social Council

1. Requests the Secretary-General to circulate to Member Governments and to non-governmental organisations in consultative status, a questionnaire designed to obtain information on consent to marriage and requirements as to age and registration of marriage;

2. Requests the Secretary-General to prepare for the 14th session of the Commission on the Status of Women a report based on information received from governments and from non-governmental organisations;

3. Invites Member Governments and non-governmental organisations to co-operate with the Secretary-General by providing the information requested at an early date;

4. Considers that it may be appropriate to prescribe desirable standards in this field by means of an international instrument under the auspices of the United Nations which would establish a minimum age of marriage, preferably of not less than 16 years; requirement of free consent of both parties to the marriage; and compulsory registration of marriages;

5. Invites the Secretary-General to prepare for the 14th session of the Commission on the Status of Women a draft convention dealing with the three questions outlined in the preceding paragraph.

BEATRICE PEARSON

The Alliance is grieved to record the death of Beatrice M. Pearson, for many years a devoted worker for the woman's movement. She was closely associated with the National Union of Women Teachers and was a member of the Executive Committees of the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene and of the Open-Door Council. Miss Pearson served as Hon. Secretary to the Status of Women Committee until forced by ill-health to resign. She was always a good friend to St. Joan's Alliance, often coming to our meetings and supporting our Christmas Sales. She wrote several most valuable articles for *The Catholic Citizen*. Miss Pearson will be greatly missed. The Alliance was represented at her funeral by the Hon. Secretary.

We offer our deep sympathy to her sisters and nephews and nieces, who formed round her a most devoted family circle.

THE MONTH IN PARLIAMENT

As we reported last month, the Life Peerages Bill passed its Third Reading on April 2nd, too late for comment in the April issue. Mr. Butler, in moving the Third Reading said that the problem of hereditary peeresses was not written into the Bill and would be out of order on a Third Reading Debate. He described Miss Jennie Lee's opposition to the creation of life peeresses as somewhat antediluvian and as a backward step which would be noted by all women's organisations. The more talent we could encourage from the ranks of women the better it would be for the country, which was why the Hon. Lady found herself deserted by some of her own Hon. Friends on this issue. Sir Frank Soskice pointed out that the scope of the Bill was entirely within the Government's discretion and that unless it was the Government's intention to exclude, at any rate, some women from membership of "another place", they could easily have included the hereditary peeresses within the scope.

Viscountess Davidson said that for years the women's organisations had been fighting for fair and equal treatment for women and that the women members of Parliament had supported them on every possible occasion. It would be disastrous if an impression were now given that women members were not in favour of this important and essential reform. Mr. Hale queried if women in the reformed House of Peers would get equal pay for equal work. Miss Jennie Lee again stated her opposition to a Second Chamber and said if we had to choose between life and hereditary peerages, it would be better to have a certain number of hereditary peerages. Mrs. Evelyn Emmet said that until the Bill became law and it was possible for women to sit in the other place, it was impossible for us to sign the Convention on the Political Rights of Women, passed by the Assembly of the United Nations in 1953. When the Bill was through, we should be in a position to ratify that Convention and she therefore welcomed the Bill from that point of view.

During the course of a discussion on Malta on April 1st, Mrs. Jeger said that the employment position there was very different from that in this country. In Malta there was practically no work for women; it was one of the most serious problems of the Island. There was a dearth of work for unmarried girls. Because they had never been at work, there had never been jobs for them—these girls never appeared in the unemployment statistics. Their inclusion would put the unemployment figures in a very different light. We knew, that in many families in this country, if the man fell out of work, it was possible for the wife to help to keep things going for a time by going out to work, but that could certainly not happen in Malta.

Mrs. Butler asked what steps were being considered by Her Majesty's Government to establish

seminars on the status of women, especially in Colonial and Dependent Territories under the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights (in accordance with the resolution passed on November 26th, 1957, in the General Assembly of the United Nations). Mr. Ian Harvey, Joint Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, said: "It is for the Secretary-General of the United Nations to consider in the first instance to what extent and in what regions, seminars on the Status of Women can usefully be organised, within the limited resources available. H.M. Government will naturally give careful consideration to any approach that the Secretary-General may make to them."

On April 15th, Brigadier Prior Palmer, during a discussion on the Budget Proposals raised the question of the taxation of married women. It seemed to him intolerable that we should have able, brilliant women, perhaps with the highest university degrees, some of them technologists and technicians, who, when they marry, are charged surtax, not income tax but surtax, on the very first penny they earn. He had known cases where the husband had said: "No, dear, you are not going out to work." We were losing a great deal of ability because of this. He intended to raise the subject on the Finance Bill.

Mr. Lennox Boyd, Secretary of State for the Colonies made a statement with regard to the Constitution of the Bahamas at the request of Mr. Fisher, in the course of which he said: "There should be universal adult male suffrage... Representations have been made to me about votes for women. The Governor and I are, however, not convinced that, at the moment, there is a sufficiently widespread demand for this change."

Mrs. Mary McAlister, who was recently returned to Parliament at the Kelvingrove by-election and who is a Catholic, made her maiden speech on April 17th, during the debate on the Budget proposals. She deplored the Government's financial policy in relation to housing, which she said would cripple house building in Scotland, but was glad to find some relief given to old age pensioners, though she reminded the Chancellor that large numbers of old age pensioners did not come anywhere near the amounts in his tables. Most pensioners were unable to save anything and she thought something more ought to have been done for them. She was glad to find a concession in respect of woollen goods but noticed that the tax on hairpins had risen. However, she would still find it cheaper to buy hairpins than get her hair cut. Happily, the following day the Financial Secretary to the Treasury announced that there had been a mistake on page 20 of the Financial Statement and that "hairpins" should read "hatpins".

P. M. Brandt

INTERNATIONAL NOTES

Australia. A Conference called by the A.C.T.U. was held in Sydney on March 21st in support of their policy of Equal Pay. It was reported that the Prime Minister of New South Wales, Mr. Cahill, was planning to introduce equal pay for men and women under State awards before the next election.

The Minister of Labour, Mr. J. J. Malony, was examining the matter and said he was "working on a scheme that I think will give equal pay."

At the Conference it was stated that the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Mr. Nash, had given an assurance that the Government would apply Equal Pay to Government employees but that the change would be spread over several years.

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Belgium. Congratulations to our member, Mademoiselle Gabrielle Gillion, on her appointment as director of a large insurance company.—*'Aigle Belge'*—at Antwerp.

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Germany. The Doctorate of Sacred Theology has been awarded by the University of Freiburg in Germany to Johanna Kopp. Only three lay persons have been granted this degree. The other two were men.

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Japan. The recently appointed Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Postal Services is Mrs. Hideko Mogani, the only woman in Japan to hold such a position.

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Morocco. The new code of Moslem Law, recently promulgated in Morocco, lays down a minimum age of marriage of fifteen years for girls and eighteen for boys. Free consent on the part of the girl is required for a valid marriage; the wife retains an exclusive right to her dowry and may demand the insertion of a clause in the marriage contract, giving her the right to the dissolution of the marriage if her husband takes a second wife. The husband's right to repudiation is, moreover, reduced.

* * *

Nigeria. On March 14th the Criminal Code (Age of Consent) (Amendment) Bill was passed. It applies to the Federal Territory of Lagos and raises the age of consent for girls to sixteen. The age of marriage is not affected by the legislation. In the House of Representatives, the Minister of Labour and Welfare said that several years ago a survey of child prostitution was carried out in Lagos by the Social Welfare Department and as a result it was considered that the existing legislation did not pro-

vide adequate protection to young girls in the difficult living conditions in Lagos. As was pointed out in the debate, there is a loophole in the Act, (similar to that in our own law) which allows an accused person under the age of twenty-one the defence that he believed the girl with whom the offence was committed, to be of (or above) the age of sixteen and that it was a first offence.

Several speakers wished that the law could be applied to the whole of Nigeria instead of only to the Federal Territory of Lagos and asked the Minister to consult the Regional Government to adopt similar laws in other parts of the Federation.

* * *

Uganda. The Bannabikira, or Daughters of Mary, a Congregation of African women, founded in 1911 by Archbishop Streicher, of the White Fathers, then Vicar-Apostolic of Uganda is the first wholly African Congregation granted pontifical right, with the approval of the Holy See.

It is good to note that two members of this Congregation are nrolled as students at the Pontifical Institute, *Regina Mundi*, for the year 1957-58. The Institute awards a diploma, *Magisterii in Scientiis Sacris* for the final examination and presentation of a thesis.

THE ABORIGINES OF AUSTRALIA

St. Joan's Alliance is represented by Miss Margaret Flynn on the Committee of the Victorian Aboriginal Group, which works to promote the welfare of the Aborigines throughout Australia, and to form a public conscience in favour of just and enlightened treatment for them.

From the Annual Report of 1956 we learn of the activities of the Group, including the inauguration by the Apex Club of an Aboriginal Welfare Scheme and their decision to concentrate on the assimilation of the part-whites, through giving them help with housing and employment, and through the breaking down of prejudice against them.

The Group had written to the Minister for Social Services urging the need for pensions for aged, detribalised Aborigines living on Government stations; it had also written for information concerning the granting of a right to prospect nickel on the Central Reserve.

Members had attended the opening of an Exhibition of Aboriginal Arts and Crafts arranged by the National Union of University Students, in aid of the Scholarship Fund for Aboriginal University Students. Two students had qualified, one of whom, Miss Margaret Lewis, of New South Wales, was to study arts at Brisbane University. She is the first Aboriginal girl to attend a University.

There are about 74,000 Aborigines, or people with a significant amount of Aboriginal blood, living in Australia. A Welfare Ordinance was ratified in 1957, giving full rights of citizenship to

all Aborigines, except those classed as "wards of the State."

From South Australia Dr. Duguid sends the text of his presidential address given last October to the Aborigines Advancement League of South Australia. In this address Dr. Duguid protests against the mining operations and rocket tests which are bringing destruction to the tribal life of the Aborigines in the Central Reserve.

In February this year a Federal Council for Aborigines Advancement was formed on which eleven organizations were represented from all five States; Dr. Duguid was elected President.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

From The Catholic Citizen, 15th May, 1933

We are aware that many well-meaning people justify licensed prostitution, but we are convinced that if they fully realised what the evil system means, and its close connection with the traffic in women and children, they would find their position untenable. In relation to sexual vice it is impossible to believe that the establishment of centres of corruption and disease is calculated to prevent a greater evil.

Women and girl inmates of licensed brothels are completely at the mercy of the proprietors. Always in debt, even when laws are passed to help them they know nothing of them, or are so brow-beaten that they dare not take the advantage offered. The tale is everywhere the same. Such persons as believe that licensed prostitution and tolerated brothels can be justified should remember that they are responsible for bolstering up the worst form of slavery.—*Leonora de Alberti in Traffic in Women and Children in the East*

BOOKS RECEIVED

Atom—There is No Time to be Lost. By Freda Wuesthoff. (Otto Maier Verlag, Ravensburg, Germany.) This book may be obtained from the above address.

Catholic Teachers Journal. (Macmillan & Burns Oates. 11s. per annum—6 issues.)

We have received the first issue of the new *Catholic Teachers Journal*, which the editor Frank Goodridge, introduces as a "forum in which all those concerned with Catholic education may discuss their problems freely." The editor is seeking for letters, criticisms and ideas. May we hope that the new Journal will support the principles of equal opportunity and equal pay for men and women teachers.

FOR SALE. Silver Fox Fur, also Limoges dinner service (6 dinner, 6 desert plates, etc.). Box 3, St. Joan's Alliance.

FOR SALE. Coleport tea service for two. Box 9, St. Joan's Alliance.

MERSEYSIDE BRANCH

A meeting of the Branch was held on March 27th by kind permission of the Chairman, Mrs. McCann, at her home at Princes Park Mansions, Liverpool, when members had the pleasure of hearing Miss M. Peachey and Mrs. Broadhurst speak on the work of the Travellers' Aid Society. This Society has been in existence in Liverpool for sixty-six years. Primarily it is to assist women and girls when travelling alone; it is the one local Society which is available for help *all day and all night*, if necessary. Women and girls (and sometimes boys and men) come when they are in difficulties—when they are sick and friendless—when they have run away from their homes or situations and when they are in need of lodging or advice. Everyone is helped.

The opportunity was taken of presenting Mrs. Brady with a small token of appreciation on her retirement as Hon. Treasurer. We are grateful to Miss Brady, of 19 Fairfield Street, Liverpool, for kindly having undertaken to act as Hon. Secretary of the Branch, in place of the late Mrs. Keating.

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