

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

Birthday Celebrations

Extracts from the address of His Excellency the Apostolic Delegate, Most Reverend Romolo Carboni, in Australia, New Zealand and Oceania, to the members of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, Melbourne, on the occasion of their 21st Birthday Celebrations.

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to meet you my dear Christian women and to address you this evening.

While in England I had the good fortune to be entertained by your co-workers of St. Joan's Alliance. They left me greatly impressed with their intelligent vision, their grasp of current issues, their apostolic spirit, their generous sacrifices of talent, time and energy.

I know that you too possess and radiate those splendid and much needed qualities.

You are women pledged to contribute as Christian citizens to the progress of social life according to the justice and charity of Christ.

If the profane historians have been rather ungenerous in the pages they have allowed to the achievements of your sex, the sacred historians, on the contrary, learning at the side of Christ, much more perceptive of the attitude of our Redeemer, have left to posterity the inspiring record of the tremendous part played by women in the divine story of mankind's redemption.

It was a Woman who on behalf of mankind assented to the Incarnation. It was a Woman who at Cana initiated the Public Mission of Her Son. It was a Woman who stood true and steadfast at the foot of Calvary's Cross. It was a Woman who waited strong, firm and prayerful, amid the silent and subdued apostles for the breaking of the first Pentecost morn.

You are women who wish to model yourselves, in all your apostolic endeavours, on the great first Woman, the Immaculate Mother of the Word Incarnate.

It must indeed lift up your hearts and rejoice your being to meditate upon the dignity and role that the Heavenly Father deigned to bestow on the humble Maid of Nazareth. . . .

At "the basis of every movement there must be an idea which is truly fruitful and truly binds it

together; there must be an ideal, the longing for which serves as the heart of the movement by transmitting a vital, irresistible force to all the members." (Pius XII.)

Its basic idea must be the "preservation and growth of the dignity which womankind has received from God." (Pius XII.)

For woman, like man, is a child of the Heavenly Father, redeemed by the precious Blood of Jesus Christ, destined to an eternity of supernatural happiness. In the essential elements of her nature and the ultimate purpose of her life, she is in all things equal to man. A complete personality in herself, she suffers no so-called basic moral inferiority in relation to man.

In fact, even here on earth, she shares with man a common temporal destiny, the destiny towards which the human race is moving, and which is indicated in the command which the Creator gave to our first parents together, "Increase and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and rule over it." (Gen. 1, 28.)

Because of this temporal goal which woman shares with man, there is no field of human activity which remains closed to her; her horizons reach out to the regions of politics, labour, the arts, and the rest. . . .

The very problems and changing tasks that confront the multiplicity of groups . . . necessarily require also great flexibility of general organisation. Too much rigidity of structure dissipates all too quickly, initiative of action. Some groups will find their chief aim in different tasks within the framework of the religious and social apostolate of the Church.

Others will prepare their members individually and collectively to act as Christian citizens in the organs and with the organs of national life.

But despite this variety of function and organisation, let me insist again; there can never be too

much unity of spirit, unity of understanding, generosity in collaboration.

Again some groups may well have the official approbation of the Church.

Others may well work without such official approbation. Doctrinally and morally submissive to the competent teaching authorities, the members of these latter may engage, individually and collectively, in action geared towards the Christian solution of temporal problems, on their own responsibility and initiative, and under their own leadership.

For in many countries there are many spheres today where the official collaboration of recognised Church bodies is neither asked nor expected—for example in the political sphere, in the industrial sphere, and so on; into those spheres the teaching and love of Christ must be borne by His followers, who exercise fully and vigorously their respective rights as Christian citizens.

As Christian citizens, my dear Members of St. Joan's Alliance, as citizens inspired by your Redeemer to work for a temporal order permeated by and structured on justice and charity, you have already done much nationally and internationally for the cause of Christ and for the good of your fellows.

May you continue to grow and to spread. May you go on drawing an ever increasing number of ardent and willing apostles to your ranks. But as, on the whole, more highly educated women of our community, may I suggest that you let your leadership and your influence be felt far beyond your own ranks—not only in the great national and international organisations with which you have liaison and in which you are making such a tremendous contribution towards peace and harmony, but also in the other groupings of women which have their basic unity in common Christian convictions as well as in the immediate aims they pursue as practical consequences of those convictions.

Ideas and ideals are of immeasurable importance. You have those; could I ask you not only to continue to pursue them but if possible also to do everything to instil the apostolic mentality in all the Christian women of the nation so that they too may be caught up in the same splendid outlook and mission as yourselves.

"If all women" I am citing His Holiness, "were to pass from innate feeling which makes them abhor war, to concrete action to impede war, it would be impossible that the total of such imposing efforts which bring into play those forces best calculated to move the will, that is piety and love, it would be impossible, We say, that it would fail to attain its end".

If all Christian women could indeed be moved into apostolic action not only might we hope for lasting peace, but for a Christian humanisation of all spheres of the social order. . . .

THE WOLFENDEN REPORT

The following resolution has been passed by the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene and supporting societies including St. Joan's Alliance:

The Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, and the supporting societies deplore the following recommendations of the Departmental Committee:

(i) To retain the words "common prostitute" in the relevant sections of the law relating to street offences.

(ii) To eliminate from those sections the requirement to establish annoyance.

(iii) To impose a greatly increased scale of fines.

(iv) That any increased penalties should include imprisonment.

The Societies concerned consider that these recommendations change the offence of solicitation from one of street order to one of morality, perpetuate the common prostitute as an outcast class, and ignore the joint responsibility of men and women for their personal morality, whilst tending to increase opportunities for the exploitation of prostitution by third parties.

They urge instead the deletion from our laws of all reference to common prostitutes and the substitution of a law applicable to all classes and both sexes making it an offence wilfully to cause annoyance to any person by words or behaviour offensive to public order or decency and making the evidence of the person aggrieved essential to conviction.

The Association and supporting societies view with profound alarm the complacency of the Departmental Committee in accepting the inevitable increase of underground activities in the organisation of vice as the price of clearing the streets, and regret that the Committee offers no proposals for dealing with that increase. The Societies support recommendation (e) in Reservation I made by Mr. Adair.

The Societies support the view of the three women members of the Committee expressed in Reservation V that the maximum penalty for living on immoral earnings be raised to five years' imprisonment.

The Association wholeheartedly supports the total rejection of proposals for licensed or tolerated brothels; and recognises that this is in line with that great tradition of British leadership in reform on problems of prostitution which many of the Committee's other proposals ignore.

We have been asked by the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene to give their new address: 129 Kennington Road, London S.E.11. Telephone Reliance 4140.

Notes and Comments

The Annual Mass for deceased members, associates and benefactors of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance will be offered on Sunday, November 3rd at 6 p.m. at St. Patrick's, Soho Square. As it is Evening Mass, we hope that many members will be able to attend and, for those who wish, a meal in Soho afterwards can be arranged.

* * *

The Maintenance Orders (Attachment of Income Bill) has been lost in Standing Committee, owing to the filibustering of some five members. The sponsors of the Bill, the Married Women's Association, have asked that the Bill be introduced as a Government measure and mentioned in the Queen's Speech.

* * *

The United Kingdom delegation to St. Joan's International Council Meeting in Paris express their thanks and appreciation to Madame Pesson-Depret, vice-president of St. Joan's International Alliance and Madame Gouffé, hon. treasurer of the Alliance and president of the French Section, for their hospitality and for the admirable arrangements they so kindly made. The resolutions passed at the Council Meeting will be found on page 70. We hope to report some of the activities of the National Sections in future issues of *The Catholic Citizen*.

We congratulate Miss P. C. Challoner on having been elected a Vice President of St. Joan's International Alliance.

* * *

Dr. Marga Klompé the Netherlands Minister of Social Welfare sent the following message to St. Joan's International Council Meeting in Paris:—

Being unable to be present at your Council Meeting, I send you my best wishes for a successful conference.

In this world of today with its growing tensions and its unacceptable differences in standards of living and welfare, we Christian women bear a heavy responsibility.

In searching for ways and means to improve living conditions for our neighbours elsewhere on this globe and to build a community in which mankind can live in harmony and peace, we should never forget that we can only succeed if real and genuine love is at the basis of our work.

May this spirit dwell in your midst during your deliberations.

* * *

It was pleasant on arrival at Paris Aerogare to find a woman taxi driver on the rank. She told us that there were some two hundred women plying taxis in Paris. To her astonished query as to why women were not allowed to drive taxis in London, we could only reply "prejudice."

That fine feminist organisation The Women's Freedom League with the motto "Dare To Be Free" celebrates its Golden Jubilee this month. St. Joan's Alliance was founded four years after the W.F.L. and has worked in close and happy co-operation with the League since then. The founder of the W.F.L., Mrs. Charlotte Despard joined the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society (afterwards St. Joan's Alliance) in the early days. The object of both societies was to win Votes for Women and later, the political, social and economic equality between men and women—an object from which the Women's Freedom League has never swerved in the whole of these fifty years. We salute the members of the Women's Freedom League and offer them our warmest congratulations. To its president Miss Marian Reeves who has so devotedly served the "Cause", we send our affectionate good wishes.

* * *

A new member of St. Joan's International Alliance is Mrs. Dorothy Hughes—one of the two women elected to the Kenya Legislative Council—who was introduced to St. Joan's by the International President during her recent visit to East Africa. She is the only Catholic on the Legislative Council.

Mrs. Hughes is an architect by profession and designed the Princess Elizabeth Hospital (opened by the Queen when Princess Elizabeth) and other famous buildings in Kenya. She has six children.

* * *

We send our congratulations to our member Miss I. M. Fuery on her marriage to Dr. Francis M. Shattock at St. James's Church, Spanish Place on October 12th. Dr. Shattock is the son of our chairman. Last year he accompanied St. Joan's delegation to Rouen and carried the Union Jack at the head of the English contingent which took part in the great cortège to commemorate the five hundredth anniversary of the rehabilitation of St. Joan of Arc. We wish Dr. and Mrs. Shattock many years of happiness.

CHRISTMAS SALE

Only a month to the Christmas Sale. We are ready now at the office to receive goods for the stalls. Useful gifts (new please) will be acceptable, including sweets and groceries. We also want to run a Tombola again so perhaps you could find something special for that—anything from 1s. to £1. Gifts in cash will also be gratefully received and promises of cakes for the refreshments. Will you please let us know during October what times you can help at the sale—Saturday, November 23rd at St. Patrick's Clubroom, Soho Square.

Noreen K. Carr
Hon. Treasurer

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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St. Joan's International Alliance

Les 14 et 15 Septembre 1957, s'est tenu à Paris, le 14e Congrès de notre Association.

Le Samedi matin, une messe a été célébrée à la Chapelle des Capucins de la rue Boissonnade, par l'Abbé Garail, Directeur des Oeuvres fondées par l'Abbé Viollet, à l'intention des membres de l'Alliance et à la mémoire de nos amies rappelées à la Maison du Père, Maria Herminia Lisboa, Marie-José Russo et Marguerite Gemehling.

Au cours de cette messe communautaire l'Abbé Garail, après avoir fait mémoire de l'Office du jour et du Patronage de Ste Jeanne d'Arc a rappelé en évoquant l'esprit de l'Alliance, combien notre action rejoignait les préoccupations de l'Eglise et de la hiérarchie ecclésiastique. Il nous a engagé, en tenant compte des difficultés, à poursuivre notre but, en s'appuyant sur la Foi et l'Espérance.

Les séances de travail ont eu lieu à la Maison des Etudiantes, en présence non seulement des déléguées des divers pays, mais de nombreux membres de la section française et diverses personnalités, notamment Mme. Marie-Hélène Lefaucheur Présidente du Conseil International des Femmes, Membre de la Commission du Statut de la Femme à l'O.N.U.; Soeur Marie André du Sacré Coeur des Soeurs Blanches; Madame Francine Lefebvre, Député à l'Assemblée Nationale, membre de l'Alliance; Mme. Suzanne Meyer; Maire Adjoint du VIIe Arrondissement de Paris; Melle. Agnès Laurant, Maire Adjoint du Ier Arrondissement de Paris; Mme. Germaine Touquet, Conseiller Municipal de Clichy, Vice-Présidente de l'Union Européenne Feminine; Mme. Suzanne Peters, Conseiller Municipal de Montrouge, Conseiller Général de la Seine.

Le remarquable rapport présenté par Miss Barry et commenté par notre Présidente Dame Vera Laughton Mathews a fait l'objet de nombreux échanges de vues, fort intéressants auxquels

ont pris part Soeur Marie André du Sacré Coeur, Mme. Lefaucheur, Magdeleine Leroy Boy, Miss Mabel Strickland, Francine Lefebvre et des représentantes d'associations féminines, membres de l'Alliance.

L'ordre du Jour très chargé ne laissait que peu de temps pour les loisirs et distractions, toujours nécessaires après l'attention du travail. Nos amies se sont retrouvées le soir, après dîner pour une promenade de nuit sur la Seine. Le Coche d'Eau, bateau parisien fort confortable nous a promené, de la Tour Eiffel à la Cité, au milieu des berges illuminées. Nos amies ont admiré au passage, la Place de la Concorde, le Vert-Galant et le Pont Neuf, Notre Dame, la pointe de la Ste Chapelle, l'Hôtel des Monnaies et l'Institut eux-mêmes magnifiquement illuminés, et c'est à regret que nous avons du regagner la terre ferme, après ces deux heures de croisière.

Le détail des travaux et des rapports des sections nationales est donné d'autre part, nous ne tirerons donc, ici, de ces deux jours d'excellent travail que des conclusions d'ordre général.

Tout d'abord, la Section Française a été heureuse et fière d'accueillir, cette année le Congrès de St. Joan's. Le climat de confiance et d'amitié, qui a présidé à nos travaux, a fait de ceux-ci une rencontre, dont la valeur est réelle. Et cela est encourageant, malgré les difficultés rencontrées et que nous reconstruirons encore.

A sa fierté, la Section Française ajoute sa reconnaissance à Dame Vera qui a bien voulu accepter de continuer à assumer la lourde tâche de Présidente. A Miss Barry, dont le travail, constant ne saurait se mesurer et qui l'assure avec tellement de foi et de dévouement. A notre interprète Dr. Shattock, fidèle à la forme et le fond de nos pensées communes, dans ses traductions impeccables. A toutes nos amies déléguées, que nous remercions de leur présence, de leur attention et de leur travail.

Marthe Gouffé

VOCATION TO PRISON

Dorothy Day of *The Catholic Worker* (U.S.A.) was recently sent to prison on account of her pacifist resistance to Civil Defence Exercises in New York. In the current *Catholic Worker* she describes her prison experiences in an article entitled "Vocation to Prison." She touches on two things of especial interest to our readers. The women in the prison asked her to speak for them (and she did do so on the "Night Beat", interview programme on television). The prisoners begged her to tell the world "how we are treated here"—in this House of Detention. They asked her to tell the world outside about "conditions." They emphasised the crowded and confined surroundings.

"We are here for years, to work out our sentences, not just for detention! Shut in by walls, bars, concrete and heavy iron screenings so that one's vision of the sky from the roof is also impeded, one's eyes suffer from the strain. One's nerves clamour for change, for open air, more freedom of movement."

"Over on Hart's Island and Riker's Island the men can get out and play ball, can work on the farm, in the tree nursery. All around is water and boats and seagulls, and the beauty of the sea air coming from the Atlantic. And the women have long been promised North Brother Island, as a companion institution for them. But there are insuperable obstacles, seemingly, in the way. Money of course figures largely. There is money for Civil Defence drills, for death rather than for life, money for all sorts of nonsensical expenditures, but none for these least of God's children suffering in the midst of millions who scarcely remember they are there. The *New York Times* in an editorial two years ago referred to the Women's House of Detention as a Black Hole in an editorial so titled. But nothing is done. 'Nothing short of a riot will change things,' the warden told us."

Dorothy Day touches in no uncertain way on "the problem of prostitution." We quote—and let the quotation speak for itself, for these things should be known and should be unmasked.

"As for the problem of prostitution, most of the girls openly admitted it. 'I'm a pross,' they told us. 'I was money hungry. I wanted a car,' or 'I wanted drugs.' They were much interested in what Judge Murtagh had said at a recent conference on the problem, and they had heard of his book on the subject. They felt the injustice of the women being arrested and not the men, and they despised the tactics of the plain-clothesmen who solicited them in order to trap them. The grossest and most horrible misconception held not only by prostitutes but also by some pious people is that were it not for the lowly prostitute there

would be far more sex crimes. I heard this statement made by Matilda, one of the girls down the corridor one evening when she was in a quieter and more philosophical mood. It is an old fashioned notion in a way, since sex relations have become so easy going in these 'post war generations'. Anything goes now, in the world, when there is no accepted religious practice, when the commandments are not accepted as the law of God. I have even heard Catholics debating how far one could go, in kissing, for instance—and this at a Catholic Action conference, in a Catholic Centre. How many Catholics have any concept of purity as a positive virtue, and relate that purity to marriage relations? We are not a chaste generation. But what Matilda went on to demonstrate was that jaded men in their demands on prostitutes wished to explore every perversion, to the disgust of what society considers the lowest of women, whores and dope fiends. These are not pretty words nor are they pretty thoughts. But everything comes out in the open in jail. 'The more I see of men,' one girl said, 'the more I'd prefer relations with a woman.' And another pretty little thing added wistfully, 'I've got to get used to the idea of men, so that I can have a baby. I would love to have a baby.' Some years ago a good Catholic layman on his return from Italy said to me. 'Prostitution is accepted in Italy. It is legalised. They regard these things more realistically, and accept it as the lesser of two evils. Even the theologians justify it as preventing greater harm, and in a way protecting good women and children.'

"And yet Cardinal Newman wrote once that, not even to save the world, or to save good women and little children, could a single venial sin be committed."

Christine Spender

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

From "The Catholic Citizen" October 15th, 1932.

The International Petition of Catholic Women begging "that a woman whether married or unmarried should have the same right as a man to retain or change her Nationality" having been presented at Geneva, by a decision of the Council of the League of Nations was circulated to the 13th Assembly.

The Signatories of the Petition, numbering 8,000, are drawn from twenty-three countries. In the short time at their disposal, the *ad hoc* Committee who organised the Petition have done wonders.

The petition was open to men, and an analysis of it shows the names of a great number of the clergy, Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, Canons, members of religious orders, and a number of the secular clergy from various countries. The names of many distinguished men and women appear in this interesting petition, professors, Members of Parliament, Legislatures, Municipalities, and the professions, are all represented. A comprehensive list, on which we congratulate the International Committee.—*Notes and Comments.*

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE 14TH COUNCIL MEETING OF ST JOAN'S INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE, PARIS, 1957

Slavery

St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance expresses its satisfaction that the Supplementary Convention on Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery was adopted by the Conference of Plenipotentiaries at Geneva on September 4th, 1956 and came into force on April 30th, 1957. It rejoices that this Convention includes the complete abolition or abandonment of such institutions and practices analogous to slavery as child marriage, child betrothal, forced marriage, transferring of wives and inheritance of widows.

The Alliance further welcomes the Recommendation of the Conference that a study should be made of the question of the age 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," and that this study has been entrusted by ECOSOC to the Status of Women Commission.

Nationality of Married Women

St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance welcomes the adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations on January 29th, 1957, of the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women, which gives a married woman a right to her own nationality and the Alliance congratulates the Status of Women Commission on its eight years' hard and persistent work on the subject.

The Alliance regrets that the Convention contains a discrimination in that an alien wife may acquire naturalisation on easier terms than an alien husband.

Recovery Abroad of Maintenance

St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance welcomes the United Nations Convention on the Recovery Abroad of Maintenance, adopted on 20th June, 1956. It further urges National States to alter their legal systems, where necessary, in order to make it possible for them to sign the Convention.

Political Rights

St. Joan's International Alliance expresses its satisfaction that equal franchise and eligibility for men and women have been granted in many additional countries. It calls upon those Governments, which have not already done so, to grant women the same political rights as men.

Marriage

St. Joan's International Alliance believes that the Sacrament of Marriage entails an indissoluble monogamous union entered into with the full consent of both parties; with a full sense of responsibility and without the intention to restrict procreation by artificial means.

(a) It demands that those laws which still impose a measure of civil incapacity upon the wife and married mother shall be rescinded.

(i) A married woman should have the same rights as other citizens—

(a) regarding nationality and domicile;

(b) to contract, earn and to exercise rights over her own earnings and property.

(ii) A married woman should exercise equal rights with her husband over the children born of their marriage.

(iii) There should be no legal bar to a married woman undertaking work outside the home.

(iv) The economic status of the housewife should be raised. It should be legally recognised that husband and wife are partners, and each of them is entitled to share in the family income.

(b) 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.

(c) St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance further urges that provision be made whereby the free and full consent of both parties to a marriage be personally expressed before a competent religious or civil authority and that a system of compulsory registration of marriages be established.

Equal Moral Standard

(a) In reaffirming its belief in the same high moral standard for both sexes, St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance deplors the fact that the pernicious system of State regulation of Prostitution persists in many countries. It calls upon its National Sections to urge their Governments to ratify the Convention on the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others.

(b) St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance reaffirms its belief that laws to safeguard public order shall apply equally to men and women; and that all measures taken to prevent the spread of venereal disease shall be free, voluntary and confidential.

Equal Pay and Opportunities

St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance calls upon its National Sections to urge their Governments and all appropriate bodies to ensure as rapidly as possible the application of the principle of equal pay for equal work without discrimination based on sex.

It further urges National Sections to press for equal opportunities for education; for vocational and technical training; for employment and promotion; also to ensure that any Government requests for assistance from the United Nations and the specialised agencies should be for women equally with men.

It further urges that in all labour legislation, equal protection shall be given to men and women against exploitation, industrial accident or disease.

Retirement Age and Pension Schemes

St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance urges that all insurance and pension schemes be based on a system of equal contributions and equal benefits for men and women and that retirement and pension schemes be the same for men and women workers.

Education

(1) St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance reaffirms its belief that education should be based on religious and spiritual values.

(2) The Alliance urges all Governments and also Administering Authorities in Non-Self-Governing or Trust Territories, to ensure that in all schemes of education, equal opportunities shall be available for boys and girls, men and women, irrespective of religion or race.

(3) The Alliance further requests UNESCO to intensify and expand its programme relating to the education of women and girls, and urges Governments and Organisations making nominations for UNESCO grants or fellowships to adopt the principle of sex equality.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES

Among the members of the newly appointed Legislative Council of Tanganyika which had its opening meeting on 17th September, is a young African school-teacher, twenty-six-year-old Miss Bertha Akim. Miss Akim is not the first African woman to serve on the Legislative Council (she has in fact had two predecessors) but she has the distinction of being the first woman from Tanganyika to undertake a course of study in the U.S.A., having quite recently returned from a year's course in child psychology at Mount Holyoake College near Boston. A team of girls from this College won a television quiz and offered a year's study to an African Student from Makerere, the only University in East Africa. Bertha Akim was the lucky girl chosen.

Miss Akim comes of the Nyakusa tribe in the Southern Highlands Province, whose women have perhaps made more progress during the last six years than women in any part of the world. (It is true that there was room for it!) Miss Akim owes part of her success to her brother, a doctor at Tukuyu Hospital, who helped with her education.

She is an attractive and confident young woman with plenty of commonsense and is passionately interested in education and the need for training more and better teachers. That subject fills her mind more at the moment than politics but the future is still for the making.

V.L.M.

* * *

Belgium. Largely owing to the fight put up by the Belgian Co-operative Women's Guild all mothers now receive the family allowance, graded according to the number of their children. This puts an end to the system by which special allowances were paid to mothers who stayed at home—a system which by implication attempted to deny to women their hard-won economic right to earn.

* * *

Germany. We are happy to record that two members of St. Joan's International Alliance have been re-elected to the new Bundestag. Frau Aenne Brauksiepe, president of the German Section of the Alliance, has been returned for the third time for the same constituency in Cologne. Frau Elisabeth Pitz of Wiesbaden has been elected for the second time; she has done outstanding work in connection with the latest Youth Protection Law. In the new Bundestag, every tenth member is a woman.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Miracles Still Happen. By B. G. Sandhurst. (Burns Oates, 6s.)

The Story of a Soul, St. Therese of Lisieux. (Burns Oates, Universe Books, 2s. 6d.)

REVIEWS

The Child's Mass Book. By Rev. Paul Ryan. (Longmans, 1s. 9d.)

This little book was first published in Australia in 1953 and should have a great welcome in England where its simplicity and straightforwardness must make appeal to the small First Communicant. The illustrations and general set-out are much above the average for this type of book. A "must" for the Catholic child and it will teach lessons to God's older children. C.S.

Study of the Role of Women in Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and Syria 1954-1955. By Ruth F. Woodsmall and Charlotte Johnson. (International Federation of Business and Professional Women.)

In this study of a group of countries of central importance in the Arab world, the help of the women concerned was engaged by the formation of Advisory Committees in each country, "cross-sectional in character, made up of leaders in civic affairs and women's organisation and women in professional life, representing various interests and activities and religious affiliations."

Generally speaking in all the countries under consideration there is an increase in the freedom of urban women in social relationships and in the choice of a spouse with a background of conservatism in the rural areas. Polygamy is on the decrease and women are becoming conscious of the inequalities which exist, e.g. in guardianship and inheritance.

In Lebanon, political equality was granted by decree in February 1953—the result of a careful and persistent campaign carried on for ten years by a group of women determined on full political equality and refusing any half measures. In Egypt the Feminist Union and the Bint el Nil have carried on a similar campaign: in Iraq there is apparently little desire for the vote, "no woman's organisation especially promotes equal political rights for women"; in Jordan "other issues have had priority" during the political upheavals since 1948, but the Jordan Women's Alliance is working for equal political rights. In Syria women enjoyed full political rights for a brief period in 1953 but lost them after the coup d'état of that year. The Syrian Federation of Women's Organisations is working to regain these rights.

The age of marriage is steadily rising in the countries under review, largely owing to the increased importance given to the education of girls. In Lebanon "there is no legislation to control early marriages but the practice is no longer common"; in Egypt marriage under the age of sixteen for girls is against the law; in Iraq the age of marriage for girls is changing "in the lower income class it has moved from eleven to

about fourteen, in the middle and upper classes from fourteen to seventeen years. College girls rarely marry before they are twenty"; in Jordan "public opinion once favoured marriage for girls at the age of sixteen but twenty is now considered more appropriate."

It is a pity that in this study approval of birth control centres as evidence of progress is expressed and that no word is said as to the prevalence of female circumcision.

P.C.C.

HERE AND THERE

For the woman in industry, electricity has indeed opened up possibilities of a good life, which would have appeared a wild dream during the years of the industrial revolution. . . . Dirt and women have always been sworn enemies. It was the unavoidable dirt of the 19th century industry that made it inimical to educated women and so divorced them from the share they had had in planning the industries of the 17th and 18th centuries in Britain and reduced the share of women in industry to that of dull, heavy and ill-paid work that was done only by those who could gain their bread in no other way. . . . The lack of scientific opportunity for girls was still a disturbing factor of our educational system. For instance, the whole field of sound recording, a profession to which women were admirably suited, was a completely closed shop to them because so few women had the necessary education to enter this work when it was developing in the 1920's or to break into it now.—*Miss Mary Field at the Annual Lunch of the Electrical Association of Women.*

* * *

Our steward here in Nigeria reads as many magazines as he can to improve his English. He was very struck by one cotton dress in *Woman's Own* priced at seven guineas. A bargain, he thought, because he assumed it included the model! In this area wives cost anything from £30 to £100 according to their education and standing of the girl's family. Our steward is anxious to get married and has already saved more than seven guineas—hence his interest!—*Mrs. Quilley Farmer, East Nigeria.—Quoted from Woman's Own.*

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