

Dup.

WOMEN'S SERVICE  
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NOT TO BE TAKEN AWAY

The Church  
 Militant  
"The weapons of our warfare are not carnal,  
but mighty through God."

Vol. XVI. New Series. No. 2.  
Quarterly.

APRIL, 1927  
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## The L.C.M. (ANGLICAN.)

### OBJECTS.

1. To urge the Church to full recognition in its own ordered life, and to more strenuous advocacy in the life of the nation, of the equal worth of all humanity in the sight of God, without distinction of race, class or sex.

2. In obedience to this principle to pray and work for:—

(a) The maintainance and setting forward of the belief that women as well as men are truly called of God and should be ordained to the Sacred Ministry of the Catholic Church, according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ: for the promoting of God's glory and the edifying of His people.

(b) The candidature of women to the Councils and Lay Offices of the Church and the safeguarding of the position of women serving the Church in other ways.

(c) The establishment of equal rights and opportunities for men and women in Church and State.

(d) Equal opportunities for all to develop to the utmost their God-given faculties in a community ordered on the basis of justice and brotherhood.

(e) The settlement of all international questions on the basis of right, not of might.

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# THE CHURCH MILITANT

VOL. XVI. NEW SERIES, No. 2.

APRIL, 1927.

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The insertion of Letters and of Signed Articles in this paper implies that their contents are thought likely to prove of interest; but the League is not responsible for the opinions thus expressed.

## Prayer in 1927.

Last quarter we re-dedicated ourselves to the task of the truth that "in Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free, male nor female." We still have to consider the reception, the assimilation, the expression of that truth.

### THE RECEPTION OF TRUTH.

"Speaking the truth in love; Love rejoiceth in the truth; seek and ye shall find."

Prejudice is dissolved by truth; compare "the truth in love" with the truth spoken in bitterness.

Let us pray:—

For all minds obsessed with ideas that have not been submitted to the touchstone of truth (this is common to us all in varying degrees); that such minds may yield themselves to be disciplined by God Who is Truth.

For all historians and research workers in all departments of life and learning.

For all pioneers who are making history today; for the newly elected Executive Committee of the L.C.M., offering thanks for the service and devotion given in the past and asking for grace and wisdom to go forward.

### CHRISTIAN IMAGINATION.

Let us corporately make an experiment in Christian imagination. Think of those who differ from us on problems of race, class or sex; ask God to help us to approach the subject from their point of view; ask to see whatever is good in their thought; try to share it with them; think of the underlying unity of motive between us and them; ask to be shown God's solution of these problems; think of them and us as fulfilling that will; then say the Our Father, uniting ourselves with them.

Let us give thanks for all who are seeking truth.

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## A 'New-World' Prayer Book.

It will be expected that in this our first issue since the publication of the New Prayer Book we should make some attempt to discuss such of the approved additions to and deviations from the Book of 1662 as specially concern the members of this League and the ideals for which they stand. The resolutions lately passed at our Seventeenth Annual Council Meeting have not altered those ideals, and it is therefore our present task to discover how far the additions and alternatives offered by the Bishops and accepted by the overwhelming voice of the Convocations operate in the direction in which it is the set purpose of this Society to urge the Church, *i.e.*, the recognition of the equal worth of all humanity, without distinction of race, class or sex, and the practical implications of that belief.

Members of a Society like ours who believe firmly that our tenets are part of that truth into which the Holy Ghost will lead the Church in His own good time, have much to be thankful for in this Book. The Preface (1927) should be studied by all Church folk. (While they are about it they might as well read that prefixed at the Revision of 1662 also: the last paragraph is to be commended to some present-day critics!) The Revisers have stressed for us and have summed up in adequate language much of what has been in the minds of all of us who, however conservative-minded over our forms of prayer, have longed for the Church to take official cognisance of "what has been happening during two hundred and fifty years." They refer to the breaking down of old barriers "as by sea and land and air men are brought ever closer together." They speak of the rise of numbers with which "has come also a shifting of power from the few to the many." And although there is no direct reference to what was described recently by a young churchman at a meeting in aid of Preventive and Rescue work as the most important change of all, yet we feel that in the minds of the Revisers, as in ours, the awakening of women to their duties and privileges as citizens of a free commonwealth is implicitly recognised as a wonderful work.

Let us now seek to see how far our Fathers in God have sought to place an authoritative imprint upon these new prayers and thanksgivings and new occasions of worship, which they remind us, our hearts and minds frame for themselves from age to age. We find at last plainly set down with a definite bidding (and not only in the

Accession Service) prayers "for the unity of all Christian people"—of all races, of all classes, and of both sexes. And we have certain specific changes and additions. There is a prayer for the British Empire which asks God to "draw together in true fellowship the men of divers races, languages and customs who dwell therein"; a place has been found for Bishop Cotton's beautiful prayer which begins "O God who hast made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth," and not only is there—in addition to the petition in the Litany—a general prayer for the Peace of the World, but our Revisers have used an old model and along with the prayer "for the High Court of Parliament, to be read during their session," have included one "for the Assembly and Council of the League of Nations, to be read during their sessions or at other times."

And just as we have a positive prayer for Peace, and not only a negative supplication for safety from our enemies in time of war, so we have a positive prayer for industrial Peace "that in all dealings one with another we may shew forth our brotherhood in thee," in addition to a petition to be used "in the present industrial trouble." The Rogation Days have special prayers provided, and opportunity has been taken to pray not only for the fruits of the earth and the sea and for those who gather them in, but also for that great army of workers who "labour to the welfare of mankind."

While the relations between nation and nation and between class and class find their way into the general parts of the Book, it is perhaps natural that the relation between the sexes is dealt with only in the marriage service. We should have welcomed a dignified prayer for a blessing on the friendship of men and women not called to be married, but there are perhaps few occasions on which its public use would be called for, and its place in a book of *common* prayer thereby justified. Our readers must bear with us while we re-iterate the points wherein the Alternative Form of Solemnisation of Matrimony differs from that now in use. We regret that the order of the causes for which matrimony was ordained has not been amended, though we are thankful for the new language. In passing we may note that the jibe of a contemporary that in this full-blooded and outspoken age it should have been thought necessary to alter the language of the second cause, is singularly inept: the language has been modernised, it is true, but it has also been given a positive emphasis, and the whole tone is thereby raised.

The "marriage" portion of the service holds an important change: in the new form the vows are identical and so is the language in which troth is plighted. There is, unfortunately, no provision for the giving of a ring by the woman to the man and the somewhat archaic question (still left without an answer) "Who giveth this woman to be married to this man" still stands. We wish the Bishops could have seen fit to remove this: it is true, of course, that it is the church's priest who gives the woman to her husband, but does he not equally give the woman her man? And the rubric does still retain the mistaken idea that she can be given to the Church by someone other than herself. The prayers which follow have for the most part been improved, and we join with our contemporaries in thankfully recording the fact that the many Old Testament allusions, including references to Jewish patriarchs, have been omitted as inessential to Christian marriage. We greatly deplore that the prayer of Nuptial Benediction has not received greater amendment: the anti-climax still remains. The differing form of words in regard to the man and the woman is open to misconstruction—not perhaps to the thoughtful, though even they may be forgiven for desiring to

pray for man and wife in the same terms, but for those who do not see beyond the fact that the literal request for faithfulness is made on behalf of the woman only.

The revised Marriage Service does not contain all for which we have prayed and worked, but it does contain a great deal. May we not say that it is an answer to those prayers and the result of that work? We are not afraid of saying too much when we say that the steady educative pressure exerted by the League has had much to do with forming the public opinion which has desired these changes and brought them about.

The "Thanksgiving of Women after Childbirth" is another service in which we should have welcomed greater amendment. The League has always wished to see both parents equally called upon to give thanks, and though this point of view has not been given full expression, yet there is in the Revised Book a recognition of the husband's part. Instead of being somewhat pointedly (and mediævally) excluded, he is encouraged to come with his wife, and is recognised in the prayers as having a duty towards his child. This service has been made more beautiful by the insertion of a Blessing for use when there is no Communion.

The last matter to be dealt with in a survey of this nature is that of an interesting and important variation between the provisional and final forms of the Book—we refer to the inclusion in the provisional draft and omission from the final draft of the "Form and Manner of Making of Deaconesses." By the great courtesy of His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury we are able to print in this issue his explanation of the omission. With all respect, we cannot hold that explanation to be very satisfactory, having regard to the fact that "quite solid technical objections" might well have been raised in other directions by a House of Laity bent on its constitutional rights. We are not disposed to quarrel with His Grace's present judgment on the wisdom of the course followed by the Bishops and indeed it may be—we are not prepared to dogmatise on the subject—that the objectors have served the future well by their successful action. It may be observed that the "Form" in the provisional draft was not included in the Ordinal: this exclusion was foreshadowed in the Lambeth Resolutions; though the Committee on the Ministrations of Women in the Church recommended inclusion and did not fear that such inclusion need be misunderstood. For our part we have never shut our eyes to the fact that the whole question bristles with difficulty, and as our members know, we would welcome an authoritative statement on the 'character' of the deaconess.

In any case, it is for this League to stand by its own belief and to look forward to the day when men and women shall stand side by side as candidates for the Diaconate, the Priesthood and the Episcopate, shall confess their faith alike, and alike receive the blessing of the Church for the performance of like functions.

### Equal Franchise Now.

We welcome the Prime Minister's statement, and look forward to the end of this long struggle. But the end is not yet, and our readers are urged not to relax their efforts to bring home to their Parliamentary representatives the necessity that the promised Bill shall be carried through in the Session in which it is introduced, so as to minimise all risks as to the exercise of votes by the new voters at the next election.

## Notes of the Quarter.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has recently conferred the license to teach theology on Miss Mary Moffatt, Divinity Mistress at Edgbaston Church of England College, and on Miss K. M. Tanqueray, Lecturer in Theology at the College of the Ascension, Selly Oak. The licenses were given at a service in Lambeth Palace Chapel, and in his address the Archbishop referred to the increasing need for well qualified women to teach Divinity in the higher schools. Over a hundred women have gained the diploma and seventy hold the license given to teachers of theology. We have said before—but it cannot be said too often—that qualified women who hold this license ought to be allowed to preach; they have been tested and are known to possess sound theological learning. Even the Archbishop, who confers the diploma and the license, could not refuse on the score of unfitness, and where can a more suitable place be found to teach theology than the pulpit?

\* \* \* \*

One of the women members of the Westminster City Council, Mrs. Lionel Harris, was appointed recently with two aldermen and three other councillors to attend a service at the Abbey. The following day she was told she would not be wanted, as women were not allowed to sit in the choir stalls where the councillors would be accommodated!

Surely this must be a new regulation? Is the present Dean responsible for it? And why must not women sit in the choir stalls? We can think of no reason unless it is because their charms may cause the attention of the "singing men" to wander. But imagination boggles at the extraordinary point of view which can forbid a woman to attend as an official representative solely on such a puerile ground. There must be some other explanation; we should like to know what it is.

\* \* \* \*

We apologise for a slip in our last quarter's issue which described Deaconess Frances Birley as late Head Deaconess in Manchester. This position was of course held for many years by Head Deaconess Amelia Bromley, who has recently been succeeded by Head Deaconess Margaret Wordsworth. Deaconess Birley writes that she should not have been described as a founder member of the Women Citizens' Association; she was an ordinary member but has always been too busy with her own work to give much time to the Association.

\* \* \* \*

The Chapter of the College of Grey Ladies in the Diocese of Southwark decided that their response to the World Call should be an offer of free training for the space of two years for those who were offering for service abroad, two places in the College being reserved for them for that period. Five students have already been sent for varying periods by S.P.G. and C.M.S.

\* \* \* \*

Since our last issue, Part I of the important report of the special body of experts appointed by the Council of the League of Nations to investigate the conditions under which the Traffic in Women and Children is carried on, has been made public. The report has made considerable stir in quarters where the facts it disclosed are entirely new, and it is hoped that public opinion will be stirred in the countries where it is most sluggish. We hope to have an article on the report in a later issue.

## Advisory Council for Women's Service to the Church.

BY HENRIETTA BELL.

(Mrs. G. K. A. Bell is one of the members appointed to the new Advisory Council by the Central Conference of Women's Church Work, on which she has served from its beginning.—EDITOR.)

If small beginnings and slow growth are symptomatic of sure foundations and a great and beautiful building, the Advisory Council for Women's Service to the Church has made a start on approved principles.

In 1919 the Central Conference of Women's Church Work (a continuation Committee of the Pan Anglican Congress of 1908) made a survey of Women's salaried work for the Church. The Report of this survey revealed many things, but in particular the extremely unorganised condition of women's work for the Church. Since then progress has been made, perhaps more in thought than in practice. It was a real, if unrecognised, advance when it became admitted that *some* diocesan organisation for dealing with women's work was desirable! About 1919 the Inter-diocesan Council for Women's Work came into existence. Its object is: "The raising of the Standard of Women's work in the Church of England by securing a supply of women workers spiritually equipped and adequately trained." This Council is commending itself to the Dioceses. It has learnt many lessons, and made many discoveries, and taught its lessons, and shared its discoveries, so that, in 1926 twelve Dioceses are co-operating in the work of this Council, and its influence is a real and growing one outside its apparent sphere of action.

In Feb. 1924, this Council—which concerns itself with the *training* of workers—asked the Central Conference of Women's Church Work to call a Conference of those concerned, as the development in women's work showed that there was considerable experience to be shared, and need for consideration of lines of future development and co-operation. This Conference only took place at Swanwick in June 1925. It was self-supporting financially, and business-like in character. A good deal of work was done beforehand, by memoranda carefully collected and edited, especially on:

- (1) The present work done by women for the Church.
- (2) Training for Church Work.
- (3) Organisation of Women's Church Work.

Membership of the Conference was by invitation, and consisted of 3 people from each Diocese—of whom one at least was a man—and representatives of divers branches of work. There was a spirit of breadth and reality about this Conference which gave hope for the future. It was no congenial group of tried adherents to any one policy, retrograde or revolutionary. It brought together people of different outlook and ideals, working in different departments. It gave to those who attended it a sense of solidarity and fellowship, and unanimity upon certain fundamental principles was a marked feature of the discussions. This Conference duly reported to those responsible. Eventually the following resolutions were proposed by Mrs. Creighton, seconded by Head Deaconess Siddall and carried *nem: con.*:

- 1.—"That a Central Committee be appointed to consider such questions as may arise with regard to the whole of women's work for the Church, and the co-ordination, where desirable, of existing organisations such as the I.D.C., the C.C.W.C.W., and others.

Such Committee to consist at first of 12 men and women, with power to co-opt not more than 8 others; the 12 to be appointed as follows:—One of each sex by each of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the remaining 8 by the C.C.W.C.W. who shall ask the I.D.C. to nominate 2 of the 8.

The Secretaries of the I.D.C. and the C.C.W.C.W. to be *ex officio* members of this Committee."

2.—"That the C.C.W.C.W. be asked, with the co-operation of the I.D.C., to appoint the first Secretary of the Central Committee, whose appointment must be sanctioned by the Archbishop."

So the Advisory Council for Women's Service to the Church came into being. The Bishop of Blackburn—who as Bishop of Kingston presided over the Swanwick Conference—is its first Chairman. Miss Yeatman Biggs, 33, Bedford Square, W.C.1., is its Hon. Sec. She will be glad to send an explanatory leaflet, or any information about it, or about the Inter-diocesan Council to anyone who will write to her. Such enquirers will show their goodwill if they enclose a liberal supply of stamps for postage. This new Committee has no funds, it has, as yet, issued no appeal, and it is anxious to prove its worth before endeavouring to push one more grasping hand into the treasury where so few rich men cast their gifts, and where the two mites are needed for so many things.

And what, it will be asked, does this new Council want to do? It wants:

To help rather than to dictate. To think out the problems and possibilities before women's work for the Church. The questions, many and thorny of the relationship of the many unrelated ventures in women's work for the Church, to each other, and to the Church.

To make known the opportunities, training, and posts that offer. To give advice and information to those that seek it. To act as a link between those working for home and overseas.

To provide information and speakers when required for those Dioceses where women's work is now being organised on the lines suggested in the Lambeth Conference Report (1920).

To work with as much pertinacity as patience towards the education of both clergy and laity in the following directions:

- (a) The need of a definite policy and a proper recognition from the Church as a whole for women's work.
- (b) The need of Diocesan co-ordination (1) to foster vocation; (2) to protect workers and to uphold a high standard of work; (3) to prevent overlapping; (4) to bring together the various kinds of work and workers and to be a stimulating, living centre for counsel, fellowship and progress.

This Council wishes to claim the help of all those who care, who are dissatisfied with the present position, but believe it capable of improvement. It wants help more especially in the educating of public opinion. Head Deaconess Siddall writes in the Report of the Deaconess Institution: "The problem is still before us as to how we are to find women of education who are prepared to give their life-service to the Church, and this is coupled with the problem, how the Church can use to the full the service of its educated women.

The University woman does not come forward, we are told, because the Church has no use for her; and on the other hand, the Church does not provide the openings because there are not the women qualified to fill them."

The solution of this problem demands the formation of a strong public opinion, keenly desirous of, and believing in, a better state of things. This Council wishes, not only to advise and if it may be to

co-ordinate workers and work that already exist, but to help to foster a public opinion on the subject—and more particularly among those who are responsible for the great and varied work that is already being done—so that the policy outlined in the last Lambeth-Conference Report may be developed far more generally and consistently.

At present the Council is engaged in gathering and tabulating information of every kind relating to Church work for women at home and abroad. It needs prayers, interest, financial help from all those who believe in the Church's capacity to make a far fuller use of the ministry of women, and desire such ministry to be raised to the highest pitch of devotion and excellence.

## Women and the Service of the Church.

### II. THE SERVICE OF THE SANCTUARY: *Fiat Experimentum.*

By W. F. GEIKIE COBB, D.D.

If the cynic may be listened to, we shall probably be told that the age we live in is suffering from a feverish and fatuous belief that progress means the suppression of the individual by the group, and that the greatest sinner in this respect is now the official Church. Judging by appearances the cynic has a case, perhaps a strong case, especially when he backs up his gravamen by a reminder that it is men who make the mould of the group and that it is women who are the guardians of individuality, and that in spite of this women are consenting to the establishment of an "Advisory Council for Women's Service to the Church." All that can be said in reply is that no general formula about the relation of men and women to each other, and of the value of their work, is of any value apart from experiment. What, therefore, the Advisory Council may advise will depend for its usefulness on whether they pay informed and sympathetic regard to actual experiments.

The object, therefore, of this brief and humble paper is to put on record the nature of an experiment in women's activities in the sphere of public worship, which has now been carried on in one Church for over a dozen years.

The employment of women choristers, indeed, is no new thing, and has for many years been a common feature in the worship of the Free Churches, and has been not unknown in Anglican churches. But it has not been regarded kindly always, for I remember that many years ago the London Gregorian Association declined to allow any place among the massed choirs at their annual festival to our women choristers.

None the less, experience has convinced us that the devotional gain in the substitution of godly women for boys in the leading of the praises of the congregation is immense. It is like a change from a hot-house into the open air. Nor is it any just criticism on the change to say that the boy's voice chants an impersonal purity which the woman's voice inevitably lacks, for this is precisely the reason why the woman's voice ought to oust the boy's from the church choir. The boy is immature, the woman is mature; the boy cannot mean what he sings, for he cannot understand it; he may be aesthetically superior, but this superiority is paid for by the sacrifice of sincerity and fervour. It is hardly too much to say that much of the lukewarmness among professed Church people is due to a subconscious feeling of the unreality of music in Church sung by boys and professionals. At all events, experience has convinced me that

women are infinitely preferable to boys in places where devotional fervour is the prime consideration.

Again, it has been said by a high authority—perhaps the highest in the Anglo-Saxon world—that as women excel over men as actors, so do they make better readers. Here, too, our experience confirms the master's verdict. For many years a woman has read the lessons in our church; she has read them better, more intelligently, more clearly and with more feeling than most clergy, and is invariably listened to with hushed and breathless attention.

When the late ghastly war broke out, our young men went from us one by one, never to return, and in our poverty we fell back for servers at the altar on to the ministrations of ten or a dozen women, who in turn serve. The Lord's table should not only be furnished with guests, but should also be dignified by the presence of an imposing number of attendants—four at the least. Accordingly, we have clothed our godly women-servers in comely surplices which are ample enough to satisfy the Holy Father, and in blue veils, which show that we have not been oblivious of that dictum of St. Paul which is so frequently quoted with whole-hearted fanaticism.

The result of our experiments has been a surprising success. Needless to say, like all who make experiments, we were not at first quite easy about the venture we were making. We might have had to fight down, or live down, prejudice, but no dog barked. We might have had difficulties from the "affectability" of women, or from their inability to adapt themselves to untried duties. We had none. On the contrary, they have done their work with a dignity, a reverence, a precision, and a sincere humility which are beyond all praise, and have been to me through a dozen years a matter for heart-felt gratitude and wonder. Whatever the reason may be, it is a fact of experience that women serving the altar are as superior to men there as they are to boys in the choir. The use of boys at the altar seems preposterous to those who have found some better thing, and if allowed at all it should be merely as a *pis aller*.

Perhaps it is right to add that great care should be exercised in the selection of women servers. They should have come to years of discretion, and be free from egoistic strivings, like all the Lord's servants. Further, we have enjoyed, until the War broke out, a succession of men sacristans, admirable in every way, and have had ever since 1914 the services of a woman sacristan who falls below none of her predecessors, and adds some feminine utilities which were denied to them.

I have no experience of women as churchwardens or sidesmen, but what experience of woman's work I have enjoyed predisposes me to a conviction that whatever a man may do in church a woman, other things being equal, will do as well, and that, even if she occupy the pulpit or celebrate at the altar, we shall be where we were before she came forward as our fellow-servant on equal terms. In Christ there is neither male nor female.

### Local Crusades for Arbitration.

As a "follow-up" of the Peacemakers' Pilgrimage, it is suggested that some of our country members might be able to organise these or give help with them. Any who can do this are asked to write to the office, and Miss Chanot will link them up with others interested. A new popular leaflet on "All-In Arbitration" will, it is hoped, shortly be available.

### Deaconesses and the Revised Prayer Book.

We have received from the Archbishop of Canterbury "for such use as you may desire" the copy of a letter which he has, with the concurrence of the Bishop of Winchester, written to Head Deaconess Siddall. It explains the situation about which we were in some doubt, i.e. the omission of the "Form and Manner of the Making of Deaconesses" from the 'Deposited Book.' The letter is dated 6th April, 1927, and runs as follows:—

"You ought at this juncture to have a letter from me about the 'difficulties which arose when we endeavoured to secure, in issuing 'the Revised Prayer Book or 'Deposited Book', that the Office for 'the Ordination of Deaconesses should have its place within the Book 'itself. I had myself hoped that this would certainly be done, but 'it turned out that quite solid technical objections would be raised to 'the introduction of an Office so important which had not been before 'the House of Laity when they were considering what should, in their 'judgment, be the contents of the Revised Book. When this was 'pointed out to the Bishops we felt that real difficulties might arise 'and that (if I may put it colloquially) the Deaconess cause would 'suffer in consequence. This would I fear have been inevitable if we 'had persevered with the intention expressed by the Bishop of Win- 'chester and endorsed by myself. Accordingly we thought it to be 'wiser that the new Office, which has of course for some time past had 'the formal approval of the Convocations, should take its place as 'one of the Orders and Forms which can be issued (separately from 'the Prayer Book) under the sanction of the Bishops of the Province 'or of both Provinces. It would correspond, for example, to an 'Office for Consecration of Churches, and possibly some others.

"In some way there will I think be advantage and not loss in this 'arrangement, or at all events there will be compensations. Anyhow 'I can assure you that the matter has been very fully and carefully 'considered and that the Bishops' sympathy with all that we are 'trying to promote is indisputable. I think that some blame attaches 'to the Bishops specially concerned, including myself, for not having 'realised that the House of Laity might rightly criticise us did we 'insert as part of the Book an Office which had never been before that 'House. It cannot be said to lie outside the range of what ought to 'be the purview of the House of Laity in the Assembly. It was I 'think a disappointment to most of the Bishops that they found it 'necessary to take this course. It is, however, a consolation to those 'who were disappointed to remember that the change was due to a 'question of procedure and not to a change of attitude on the part of 'the Bishops to the Deaconess movement from which most of us hope 'so much for the Church of the future.

"I am in communication now with the Bishop of Winchester and 'others about the arrangements which will be desirable and appro- 'priate for the formal issue of the Ordination Office; and I need not, 'I am quite sure, tell you again how keenly I myself retain the anxious 'interest I have always felt in promoting the Deaconess cause in the 'way best calculated to secure for it a wider acceptance among men 'and women of goodwill throughout the Church.

'I am,

'Yours very truly

(signed) RANDALL CANTUAR."

## News from Overseas.

At the important function of the laying of the foundation stone of the Anglican Church in New Delhi, the fact is to be recorded that the procession in which the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, accompanied by Lady Irwin and the Bishop of Lahore, walked to the site, was headed by a choir of men and women in surplices. The presence of women (duly vested) with men in the choir on this historic occasion is significant of "the idea of fellowship" which the Bishop in his address said "must always be the central part of the Christian religion," and which idea he hoped this church in the new city would voice. It is also to be hoped that with the foundation stone is laid another foundation upon which may be built a ministry that will recognise the equal vocation of women with men as being necessary to the full service and development of the Church's life.

\* \* \* \* \*

We are taken back to the refreshing simplicity of the Primitive Church by a letter from a correspondent in Egypt who tells us that "the Church" in her district, having no substantial building made with hands wherein to meet, gathers in her own house where all the Services are held. Our correspondent arranges a "Lady Chapel" out of a small sitting-room facing East "with a glorious view across the Nile, which makes a very beautiful reredos." Unfortunately the visits of the priest are limited to three in the winter months with none in the summer, but how much the Services are appreciated is evident from the number of attendances which has been as many as 29 for Evensong and 16 at an early celebration, out of a possible 33. This is undoubtedly due to the efforts of the lay woman who writes to tell us of her attempt to "do her bit," as she herself puts it, for the Church. We cannot help thinking that the Church would grow in that region if this valuable work could be supplemented by a duly authorised Ministry of Women for which—unlike the case of the present male-monopolised ministry—there would be no lack of candidates.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Episcopal Synod of the Church of the Province of South Africa has issued a statement of the general principles upon which it has made criticism on the Government Native Bills now being debated. The Bishops maintain that "South Africa is irretrievably both white and black, and the two elements in her body politic are necessary to each other and are mutually inter-dependent;" and they affirm that "the Church is committed up to the hilt to advocate the advancement and development of all men irrespective of race, to the furthest point to which they prove themselves capable of attaining. It is so committed because of the Gospel of which it is the trustee. That Gospel carries with it the revelation of the value and potentiality of every human being in the sight of God. It also has within itself the Spirit which prompts aspiration after the fullest development of which human beings are capable." These are large-hearted words, and we would wish that they might extend beyond the bounds of race to sex where even Christianity has not yet been able to break down the barriers of prejudice and exclusion.

\* \* \* \* \*

Some prominent Judges in the U.S.A. have been expressing their opinions in *Equal Rights* regarding the value of the services of women jurors. Florence E. Allen (formerly Justice of the Supreme Court of Ohio) says: "The women on the jury follow the evidence well and are unusually conscientious in their verdict. They will never play cards or throw dice to decide *their* vote, is the general opinion based upon their years of service." Judge John E. Walsh testifies that, "The

women are fully as competent as the men on our panels, and if there is any distinction as to qualifications, the distinction is in favour of the women jurors." There is a long list of equally favourable testimony from mostly male members of the legal profession; and the general consensus of opinion seems to be that women fully realise the seriousness and importance of close attention to their duties, and that their presence on juries makes for justice and well-balanced intelligent judgment to the greater exclusion of emotional verdicts.

E. RODGERS.

## Mediaeval Women.

BY MAUD ANNA BELL.

To understand the popularity of the Conventual life in Mediaeval times, attracting, as it did, so many noble, so many wise, so many of high estate, one must realize the dullness of life in a mediaeval castle. Young men went off to fight, but young women were left to an endless round of domestic duties and needlework behind the walls of their fortified homes, their lives stiff with ritual and ceremony, their halls dark by 3 o'clock of a winter's afternoon.

If they married, they were merely passed on without will of their own, to another castle and the honour of sitting on a chair instead of a three-legged stool. Wonderful it is how some of them arose and shone, learned ladies and ladies capable of directing all the "men's work" in the frequent absence of their lords; such as that Margaret Paston who wrote to her husband that "some 200 Flemmings" had tried to land on their foreshore but "I and my men at arms" fought and drowned most of them.

But the convents were full of bustle and movement, and there the scholar and the artist was free to spend her life in learning or in art, as she could never have done in her own home.

In Saxon times it was the smart thing for Kings and Bishops to build convents for their sisters; Hilda, Mildred, Mildburg, Athelburg, and many others, who all corresponded freely with learned clerks, and, enclosure not being strict in those days, were free to take a few days off when they wished to visit their friends, or even a few months when they went on a pilgrimage to Rome, a fact which must have made their married sisters green with envy!

Buffa, Abbess of a monastery in Kent in about 749, went to visit Rome, when her friend and constant correspondent, S. Boniface was staying there as the Pope's guest; and it is recorded that Buffa and Boniface visited together the tombs of the Apostles. Boniface even arranged lodgings in Rome, under the care of a Deacon, for English nuns in whom he was interested, and he asked so many to come over and help him convert the heathen in Germany that it has been said that the evangelization of that part of Europe was due to English Benedictine nuns.

Gradually enclosure became stricter, and the dress of nuns no longer earned rebuke for its "scarlet tunic, sleeves striped with silk and bows of ribbon." But the literary and artistic work continued, especially in Germany, notably in the plays of the nun Hrotswitha, and the writings of S. Hildegard, Abbess of Rupertsburg and of S. Elizabeth of Schönau, to name only two of the numbers of literary and learned nuns of the Middle Ages.

Occasionally, in very early times, life in a convent was not quite peaceful. The nuns of Poitiers revolted, in the year 589, against the appointment of an Abbess that they disliked, and in favour of the



appointment of Chrodiel, a lady of royal birth. "I am going to my royal relatives 'she said 'to inform them how I have been treated.'" So she and the strikers left the convent, gathered "a band of murderers and cutthroats," laughed at the threat of excommunication, broke into the convent and carried off the Abbess, and were only reduced by force of arms after a revolt that lasted for two years.

An Abbess was a very great lady, politically as well as spiritually. At one convent in Germany she gave her vote with the other electors at the election of the Emperor and refused to part with her right to vote—in spite of large offers of money. The Abbess of Hradslim at Prague had the right of crowning the Queen of Bohemia.

But the literary glories of the convents decayed as life became more peaceful outside the convents and education more possible for lay persons, so that in the reign of Louis XIV of France it was thought a strange thing for a nun at Port Royal to be able to understand her Breviary—a thing which probably very few lay women could then do.

Outside the cloister, but living under Rule, were a very large number of men and women, Tertiaries of the Franciscan and Dominican Orders, of whom the greatest is S. Catherine of Siena, both for her spiritual work and preaching, and for her success in her wonderful journey to Avignon to persuade the Pope to return to Rome, which he consented to do only if she went with him "as he feared his own weakness and the power of the Cardinals." With her must be numbered the great and saintly Queens, S. Margaret of Scotland, S. Elizabeth of Hungary, S. Blanche of Castile. But 'time would fail me' even to give the names of the learned and holy ladies of those centuries, in the cloister or living a disciplined lay life; or anchorites, such as Julian of Norwich whose beautiful "Revelations of the Divine Love" is now obtainable in modern English. Canonries for women do not seem to have been so popular in England as on the Continent, where they formed a convenient alms-house for impecunious but highly connected ladies. Canonesses had many privileges and few duties, but were bound, so long as they retained their prebendal stalls, to "choral recitation of the divine office, being in fact the female counterpart of the secular canons." They wore a surplice and black mantle in church, the form of the surplice varied in different canonries, some wore girdled robes, some rochets, some plain surplices, which in those French and German canonries which were secularized during the 17th century, were frequently trimmed with lace and modified to look like an ordinary dress.

Life, to the women whose convents were suppressed at the Reformation, must have been sad, and not a little bitter. To go home to be nobody, to be just an old maid, unwanted and a nuisance, after having been an Abbess, or having filled some important place in a Convent, must have been hard indeed. But life to the lay women was becoming more interesting as education, not only in household matters, became fashionable and travelling became possible. Not only Queens, but the daughters of gentlemen, such as Sir Thomas More, had a far better classical education than most girls have now, and their learning did not prevent their being good cooks, housekeepers and needlewomen, having a fair knowledge of modern languages, some skill in medicine, a light foot in a dance, and a great knowledge of music. Strange that not two hundred years after Margaret Roper carried so lightly her burden of knowledge, any learning save the most superficial should be considered almost indecent in a woman.

## Prayer in 1927.

Last quarter we re-dedicated ourselves to the task of the truth that "in Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free, male nor female." We still have to consider the reception, the assimilation, the expression of that truth.

### THE RECEPTION OF TRUTH.

"Speaking the truth in love; Love rejoiceth in the truth; seek and ye shall find."

Prejudice is dissolved by truth; compare "the truth in love" with the truth spoken in bitterness.

Let us pray:—

For all minds obsessed with ideas that have not been submitted to the touchstone of truth (this is common to us all in varying degrees); that such minds may yield themselves to be disciplined by God Who is Truth.

For all historians and research workers in all departments of life and learning.

For all pioneers who are making history today; for the newly elected Executive Committee of the L.C.M., offering thanks for the service and devotion given in the past and asking for grace and wisdom to go forward.

### CHRISTIAN IMAGINATION.

Let us corporately make an experiment in Christian imagination. Think of those who differ from us on problems of race, class or sex; ask God to help us to approach the subject from their point of view; ask to see whatever is good in their thought; try to share it with them; think of the underlying unity of motive between us and them; ask to be shown God's solution of these problems; think of them and us as fulfilling that will; then say the Our Father, uniting ourselves with them.

Let us give thanks for all who are seeking truth.

## The Public Meeting on March 25th.

On the evening of March 25th, the League held a successful public meeting in the Great Hall of the Church House, Westminster. The Chair was taken by His Honour Judge Shewell Cooper, and the speakers were Miss Margaret Bondfield, M.P., Miss M. E. Wrong (in the absence through illness of Miss Maude Royden) and Canon C. E. Raven, D.D.

The Chairman, having explained the origin and aims of the League, proceeded to introduce each of the speakers as they rose to speak. Judge Shewell Cooper's happy turns of phrase were not the least pleasant moments in a meeting where the interest never flagged from start to finish.

Miss Wrong (who was good enough to come at very short notice) spoke on Christ and International Relations; the smallness of the world, our economic interdependence, our political reaction. The only thing possible was, she said, a spiritual revolution: she instanced that the League of Nations though not technically Christian, yet gives expression to this ideal by speaking of a spirit of service. She asked further whether we were taking freedom to the communities that were ruled by fear in the same way as we sometimes take bondage.

Miss Bondfield, who spoke on Christ and Industry, began her speech by referring to a recent book on the political and social situation in Galilee in our Lord's day and reminded her audience that the violent sayings attributed to our Lord were directed against the people of his day. What then, she asked, must be the judgment to be passed on our

day and generation. She then went on to picture an over-urbanised working class, not only landless but toolless, for the worker no longer owns his tools as in the past. Miss Bondfield quoted with great effect the 15th century prayer for them that be in Poverty, and wound up by an interesting account from her own observation of Henry Ford's experiment at decentralising mass production.

Canon Raven\* spoke last—on Christ and the Ministry of Women. Co-operation between men and women held a great hope and a great danger. If the Church was to fulfil its function and if it was to think and act and be what Christ was in the days of His flesh, then surely it must express in its organisation, inward and spiritual realities. Canon Raven avowed that though he was not specially a feminist, yet if he were to ask himself who was the greatest preacher or organiser or spiritual director or spiritual force in certain movements with which he had been connected, he would be obliged to say a woman in each case. And, he continued, it is misunderstanding the whole relation of the outward to the inward to say that our outward organisation is so right that although those ministries are obvious yet we cannot put on them the outward seal. Canon Raven then proceeded to the practical need of the Church and said that in losing the first class young women, the Church was failing to get the best.

The precedent of an earlier meeting was followed in that each speaker finished up his or her speech with a prayer—Canon Raven finished with the "Our Father" and shortly after the meeting closed with the Blessing given by the Rev. John Darbyshire.

The liveliest interest was shown in the bookstall and several new members joined the League—the result of an appeal for new members made by the Chairman.

### Seventeenth Annual Council Meeting.

We have not yet arrived at the time when absent L.C.M. members may hear the proceedings of the Council Meeting broadcast "with a running commentary" while comfortably seated at their own fireside. Let us hope when that is possible, the *raison d'être* of the League may have been fulfilled and the energies of its members set free for fresh endeavours.

Our President, Canon J. G. Simpson, presided most kindly, not only at the first but again at the adjourned session—clear proof, if proof were needed, of his genuine and practical interest in our Cause.

Miss Villiers, Chairman of the Executive, in presenting the Annual Report, referred to the great loss the League had sustained by the death of Dr. Helen Hanson and welcomed the return to the League of the Rev. Claude Hinscliff. After the preliminary business had been finished, the Council proceeded to discuss a long list of resolutions. These aroused so much interest that, had time permitted, one would have been glad if more of the members present had expressed their opinion.

The first resolution on the Agenda called forth a sharp and to some of us, an unexpected divergence of opinion. Proposed by Dr. Sybil Pratt and seconded by Mrs. Martson Acres it read as follows:—

"That three of those members who have served on the Executive Committee for three or more consecutive years do not offer themselves for re-election to the Committee for the current year. In order to carry this into effect for this year, the three members shall be chosen by lot; after that they shall retire in alphabetical order."

Miss Bradford moved an amendment to the effect that the three members of Committee who had made the least number of attendances

\*A verbatim report of Canon Raven's speech will appear in the July *Church Militant*.

during the year should retire from nomination, but this was lost by 25 votes to 17, and the original resolution passed by a large majority. The three members upon whom the lots fell were Miss Maud Bell, Mrs. Wedgwood Benn and Miss Hagon, who therefore retired from nomination for this year. "Ave atque vale," we may say to them with the cheering addition of "pro tem."

To the deep regret of all who know her long and devoted service to the League, Miss Rodgers felt she could not continue to be associated with a Society which introduced an element of chance into the election of its Committee, and therefore announced that she felt compelled to retire from the League. The Council felt Miss Rodgers' resignation to be so serious a loss, that it deputed the new Executive Committee to make it one of the first questions for consideration. We earnestly hope that Miss Rodgers may see her way, if not to changing her opinion entirely, at least to modifying what is undoubtedly a very heavy blow to the League.

The following resolutions were proposed by the Rev. John Darbyshire and (in the regrettable absence of Miss Maude Royden through illness) seconded by Miss Evelyn Gunter.

- (a) That the League shall direct its principal energies for the present in the direction of the admission of women to Holy Orders.
- (b) That to this end its papers and propaganda shall have that object much more prominently stated.

both being passed by large majorities. A special sub-committee has since been set up in order to consider how the League may most effectually carry out the spirit as well as the letter of these resolutions.

Mrs. J. E. Francis then proposed the following:

- (c) That the time is ripe for a change in the title of the League in the direction of emphasising its immediate object.

but an amendment proposed by Dr. Sybil Pratt and seconded by Miss Corben was passed. This proposed to retain the old name but to add a sub-title. No satisfactory sub-title was found and the matter was referred to the Executive Committee.

After some discussion as to the exact meaning and implication of "may be" and "are truly called," the paragraph 2(a) in the objects of the League was amended as follows:—

"The maintenance and setting forward of the belief that women as well as men are truly called of God and should be ordained to the Sacred Ministry of the Catholic Church according to the Will of our Lord Jesus Christ: for the promoting of God's glory and the edifying of his people."

A resolution was also passed slightly altering paragraph 2(c) in the Objects of the League. It will now read:—

"The establishment of equal rights and opportunities for men and women in Church and State."

A resolution to delete paragraph 2(d) in the Objects was lost.

Miss Florence Taylor moved resolution II (g) and this was passed in an amended form as follows:

"That in order to further the principal object, the members of the League, individually and corporately, shall urge the employment of women in whatever services of religion are at present open to the laity: such as (a) Serving at Holy Communion; (b) Reading of Lessons; as well as all offices of administration."

The following resolutions were then brought forward and passed nem. con.

"That this meeting of the L.C.M., in Annual Council assembled, thanks the Prime Minister for receiving the deputation of representatives of Women's Societies on the question of Equal Franchise, and hopes that the statement which he promised to make in the House of Commons before Easter will indi-

cate the intention of the Government to introduce immediately a simple franchise measure giving votes to women at twenty-one and on the same terms as men."

"That the Executive Committee urges members to make a careful study of the proposals in the Composite Book of Common Prayer from the standpoint of the League by means of study circles, meetings and discussion."

"That this meeting of the L.C.M., in Annual Council assembled, welcomes the formation of the Advisory Council for Women's Service to the Church, appointed under the chairmanship of the Bishop of Blackburn, and trusts that it may do much to strengthen and safeguard the position of women serving the Church."

The new Executive Committee for 1927 consists of the following:

*President:* THE REV. CANON J. G. SIMPSON, D.D.

*Hon. Secretary:* DR. SYBIL PRATT.

*Hon. Treasurer:* MISS S. A. VILLIERS.

*Hon. Organiser:* MISS L. CORBEN.

*Hon. Editor:* MISS H. C. ESCREET, M.A.

*Committee:*

Mrs. W. Marston Acres, Mr. W. Marston Acres, Miss Dorothy Auld, Miss Lilian Banks, Miss J. Fearne Bell, Miss Bradford, Miss C. E. Clark, Miss Edith Coleman, The Rev. John Darbyshire, Miss D. De Butts, Dr. Christine Francis, Miss Lucy Hammick, Mrs. Montgomery, Miss A. M. Platt, Miss E. Poffley, Mrs. Pollard, Mrs. Seymour Seal, Mrs. Close Shipham.

The new Committee has plenty of work in front of it if all the resolutions passed at the Council Meeting are to be carried out effectually. We have a generous legacy of £200 left to us by Dr. Helen Hanson, but we still need all the financial help we can get.

Still more do we need new members to add to our spiritual capital of enthusiasm and energy and hope. Most of all do we need the prayers of our friends that we, who believe God has called us to this pioneer work, may be kept by the Spirit of God from hurting or hindering in any way the glorious cause entrusted to us.

During the last quarter the following new members have joined the League:—Miss Helen Welch, Miss Maida Randall, Miss Jane Bolin, Miss Grace Byham, Miss E. A. Wadsworth, Miss Ivy Pryke, Mrs. Curteis, Miss Ivy Smith, Miss D. M. Shackle, Miss K. Whiteman, Miss Mary Birkett, Miss Kate Coghill, Miss Marion Dunell, Mrs. Tamplin, Miss Dorothy Coldwells, Miss Helen Ball. The following old members have rejoined:—Mrs. Corner, Rev. Dr. Geikie-Cobb, Mrs. Close Shipham.

SYBIL PRATT, Hon. Secretary.

**The Treasury.**

(Money received from January 1st—March 31st, 1927.)

	£	s.	d.
Subscriptions .. .. .	109	2	0
Donations .. .. .	22	15	10
Balance of Legacy from Dr. Helen Hanson .. .. .	100	0	0
Subscriptions to, and sale of, <i>Church Militant</i> .. .. .	56	4	2
Literature Sales .. .. .	14	19	11
Public Meeting, March 25th .. .. .	20	10	6
Helen Hanson Memorial Fund .. .. .	3	2	0
Gippsland Fund .. .. .	0	10	0
Sundry Receipts .. .. .	6	1	3
	<hr/>		
	£333	5	8

**FORM OF APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP.**

I wish to become a member of the League of the Church Militant.

I am a member of

\*the Church of England

\*a Church in full communion with the Church of England

and approve of the objects of the League.

I enclose the sum of £ : : as a first Annual Subscription.

Name .....

Address .....

\*Please cross out what is not applicable.

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I bequeath to the League of the Church Militant the sum of \*£..... to be paid to the Treasurer for the time being of the said League, free of all deductions whatsoever, the receipt of said Treasurer to be an effectual discharge of same.

Name .....

Address .....

\*The sum to be written in full.

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