

ten people in the labour force was a woman; today, every fourth worker is a woman, the increase being chiefly due to the fact that there are more job opportunities for women. The increasing complexity of production processes has meant that craftsmen have been replaced by machine operators, many of them women. Changed factory techniques have also enabled women to do work which was once too heavy for their physical strength. The growth of record keeping and other office jobs has also provided more openings. Perhaps most important of all, women so proved their worth during two world wars that prejudice against hiring them is rapidly disappearing.

Today, Canadian women are doing practically every job on the list at the National Employment Service. For example, women are now aviators, veterinarians, morticians, lumber "jills", trappers and welders. Furthermore, their main occupations have changed greatly over the years.

Fifty years ago, the majority of women workers were employed as seamstresses, milliners or domestic servants. Today, half of the women at work are concentrated in the following classifications: Typists and stenographers (96 per cent are women); nurses (98.2 per cent); office clerks (42 per cent); household workers (96 per cent); sales clerks (55.1 per cent).

Although women still predominate in their traditional professions of teaching and nursing, increasing numbers have established themselves during the past twenty-five years in professions that used to be mainly filled by men or have entered entirely new fields. For example, between 1931 and 1951, the proportion of women who were chemists and metallurgists increased from 1 to 2 per cent; physicians and surgeons from 2 to 5 per cent; professors and college presidents from 8 to 15 per cent. Women had also newly-established themselves as 38 per cent of the laboratory technicians, 100 per cent of the dietitians and 17 per cent of the statisticians.

Married Women at Work

The "average Canadian woman" marries when she is twenty-three years old to a man who is three years her senior. She will have an average of 3.8 children. Very often, particularly in towns and cities, the young wife continues to work "until the baby comes". Unless there is grave financial necessity, most Canadian women prefer not to take paid jobs outside the home while their children are of pre-school age. Every year, however, more and more married women are entering the labour force as the five-day week and mechanized households have helped to make it possible for them to work both inside and outside the home. In 1941, only one married woman in twenty was working outside the home; by 1951, more than one out of every ten had a job. By 1956, one-third of the women in the labour force were married. The greatest number of working wives are between the ages of forty-four and sixty-four; they are women whose children are at school or have grown up and left home.

Working Conditions

In general, both men and women are protected by the same laws on minimum wages, maximum hours, unemployment insurance, holidays, vacations, workmen's compensation and fair employment practices which forbid discrimination on grounds of race, colour, religion or national origin. There are, however, some health and safety welfare provisions