

amused to learn that, in 1912, Sir Rodmond Roblin (then Premier of Manitoba) complained that he was "opposed by all the short-haired women and the long-haired men in the province".

There is no known ideal remedy to correct the injustices now accorded to both women and men by society's continued division of so many activities on the basis of sex. As we search for remedies we should be guilty of intellectual dishonesty if we underestimate the weight of tradition or the depth of bias -- both conscious and unconscious -- which permeates each of us. There can be no expectation that any of us, men or women, can overcome these attitudes in a period of months or even years. They have been part of us for too long.

There are, of course, remedies and influences which can be, and are being, brought to bear. Some of them -- many, I hope -- will have immediate effect, but others will require a long period of application because of the very nature of the attitudes to be changed. Some of these attitudes, I venture to guess, are apparent at this moment in the minds of some of you. Were we involved in a psychiatric exercise, I could ask who of you at this moment are saying to yourselves: "Women! Why doesn't he speak on an important subject?"

Attitudes of this sort, shared by women as well as by men, originated in the earliest phases of human evolution. The human race developed then patterns of behaviour to guarantee its existence as a species. Those patterns have continued in varying degrees in many societies throughout the world. It would be senseless for us to ask now if the species could have survived some other way. We need bear no feelings of guilt for attitudes that developed through history, but surely now that we have escaped from pure necessity we would be guilty should we refuse to question our present attitudes; should we refuse to regard women as persons in the total sense of the word.

In these circumstances, it may be too much to expect -- of government, of women, of society -- that we achieve more in the near future than a mere beginning of understanding. But how important it is that we try. And how momentous if we do achieve more, as the open and healthy attitudes of younger people convince me we shall.

Perhaps this generation has recognized, as past generations have not, that discrimination based upon sexual or racial reasons lasts for a lifetime. There are, after all, only two permanent conditions attributable to human beings. One is sex. The other is race. All other distinctions from which discrimination may grow are temporary in nature or are subject to change. Education, religion, language, age, health, economic stature, experience -- all are or can be transient. Discrimination based upon sex or racial origin is thus doubly unfair. The person against whom the discrimination is practised had no choice of origin and has no option of change.

For the same reason, because of this permanence of condition, none of us -- men or women -- are able totally to understand the view of the other sex. It is impossible in this realm for either of us to perceive objectively; none of us can remove ourselves from our bastions and look in from a neutral vantage point. Yet we must try; we must begin to try. Unless we overcome these barriers to understanding, we are less than we might be -- less than we should be. Society cannot become mature without the full participation of women. Society will not become mature without a sharing of experience.