

Woman's Part

BY KATHERINE SMITH.

PROBABLY the greatest need of working women today is to learn to reason from the particular to the general. To learn to co-ordinate the tasks in which she is engaged with the tasks which confront society as a whole.

Primitive women contributed their full quota to the needs of the society in which they lived. It was she who varied the meat diet of hunter's game with contributions of mild fruits, nuts and cereals and by so doing discovered the possibilities of the cultivation of the soil and the preservation of seed for a new harvest. It was she who tended and reared the young animals brought in from the chase which made possible the development of the herd, thereby ushering in the herding industry. It was she who ushered in primitive handicrafts in her efforts to furnish clothes and necessary household utensils for the use of the tribe. It was she who, through her maternal function, kept the tribe together and it was through her that heritage in the tribe was traced. Her position was so important that it was reflected in the religion of the times, in the dominance of goddesses over mere male gods.

Unhappily the very service which she rendered to society became the means of her own economic slavery. Handicapped with her biological position as the mother of the human race she was unable to follow far afield the avocations which she originated, and herding and agriculture gradually gravitated into the hands of the man who became the dominant economic factor. Woman sank into the slave position which she has occupied with some slight variations until modern times.

As herding and agriculture had their inception in the hands of women, machinery on the contrary had its inception and earliest development in the hands of men, and women have until recently been excluded from a share in its development. The accusation that women do not invent the mechanical contrivances, even in her own household, is true for that reason. But the process is now being reversed. Machinery is becoming practically automatic and is gravitating into the hands of the women. She is supplanting men in the industries. The price of her labor-power does not include the raising of a family and can therefore be purchased cheaper. She is now by way of gaining her freedom from one form of slavery, i.e., of woman to man, as man, though not from the wage-slave system.

That she is simply changing from chattel slavery to that of wage-slavery does not deter her from rejoicing. She is celebrating what she deems her victory pretty much as the negro who observes Emancipation Day, and she is doing as many silly things as the men who celebrate what they think is their victory on election night. This resurgence of the women is viewed with alarm by the conservative element, who ascribe it to everything but the real cause, from too much jazz to too little Jesus.

Women's part in production has not, heretofore, been recognized as having an economic value because her produce has not met in exchange on the market. It has been largely for use and appropriated by the male to his own material advantage.

Now women's vision is beginning to broaden out but she has not yet learned that the task of providing for her own needs and those of her family are the same, on a small scale, as that in which society as a whole is engaged. That it is this need which brings into existence the different methods of production, any one of which lasts only as long as it can function adequately for the needs of society and when it can no longer do so it is forced to give way to another more capable of so doing.

The final transition from one form of production to another has always been a period of great distress for the workers. Evolution takes on the form of revolution with its accompaniment of counter-revolution and bloodshed.

The woman question has ceased to exist in highly developed countries, but capitalist society has seized upon women's awakening and are converting it to their own interest. Everything womanly is being lauded to the skies. "Mothers' Day" has arrived.

Women's part henceforth is to fight shoulder to shoulder with the men of their class, not independently but together, to rid their class of the psychology that is being instilled into their minds by the present ruling class who control all the authorized avenues of education. To prepare their class to direct the revolution into safe channels and assure it a final victory over the present wage system.

War?

As we go to press it is not yet certain whether the British imperialists were serious in their attempts to start a new drive against Soviet Russia, or whether Curzon merely hoped to humiliate the Workers' Republic for reasons of internal party politics. The Government of Bonar Law has been repeatedly humiliated recently by France in the matter of the Ruhr, by America in the matter of the Chester grant. As neither of these powers is much afraid of the bully of Downing Street, "national honor," Mr. Curzon may have thought, was to be saved by an impudent note to Russia which has fewer warships than America and fewer aeroplanes than France.

Russia has made a dignified answer, refuting all the charges, reminding Britain that the trade agreement was just as much in the interest of the British people as of Russia; that Russia is not a semi-independent country like Germany, Austria or China and is fully determined to follow a policy of her own, that England with its intrigues in the Caucasus, in Turkestan and in Vladivostok should be the last to complain about Russian propaganda in the East, that the width of territorial waters is a matter for international negotiations which cannot be determined arbitrarily by England. Russia further asserts that at a time when England was invading Russian territory and killing Russian citizens, the Russian Government could not grant British spies the right of undisturbed pursuance of their honorable business. The gist of the situation is that Soviet Russia is ready to settle matters of litigation by negotiations but it will not be browbeaten by ultimata.—"Soviet Russia," N. Y.

"WHY WOMEN DON'T WRITE"

Another Letter

Editor, "Clarion"—

Regarding your note on a woman's letter, I should say that the reason women do not write is because they cannot, and they cannot because they are not widely read, and therefore cannot analyze situations connecting up the happenings of today with those of the past, and from that form a mind picture of what might be likely to happen in the future.

Potentially, woman's brain is equal to man's. Her environment in the past was one which did not develop her mentality.

The advent of machinery, forced woman outside of the home, to compete with man in the labor market, and since then her mental growth has steadily gone on. Women have had to fight down prejudice and some of the bitterest prejudice came from the side of men; they had been used to the meek, clinging vine woman, and this new creature, who demanded to know the things he knew, and challenged his sacred opinions, was not to be tolerated.

However, women have gone bravely on, and just at present, we have come to the point where we think the average man very stupid. M.B.

INEVITABLE CHANGE.

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ing restless a reaction is expected in favour of the class that it was organized to overthrow. Italy, like Britain, is suffering to give birth to a new order of things.

Lloyd George contemplates visiting Canada, the working man's paradise! Men learn from their failures and an advice to the American rulers to hold on to that 60 per cent. population tilling the soil may mean an extension of the reign of Capitalism. Farmers are isolated, and not so susceptible to the Socialist doctrine, but Britain has supplied a large portion of artisans coming from the hotbeds of industry and settling on the land, fully inoculated with the hope of getting rich quick. Failure to even get a decent living, and no hope of anything but drudgery, those artisans are good revolutionary material, and a visit of an advocate that may sail in the same ship as new capital seeking investment in British colonies may meet with a storm both on land and sea.

GEORGE PATON.

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