



The question is often put to me. What can women do to help along the trades union movement? I reply by saying, What can she not do? Ideas, like conditions, are changing, and the old idea that woman must confine her attentions entirely to the home and the raising of children is fast becoming a thing of the past. Men are beginning to recognize the important factor women are and can be in the industrial field, and know that the time has come when she must be educated along broader lines than in the past. The duties of a wife and mother will, of course make the home her first consideration, but even here a little of the broadening process will be beneficial, not only to the members of her own family, but to the families of her fellow women also.

A too close attention to home affairs is apt to make even good women selfish and narrow. Too often she loses sight of the fact that there are other homes beside her own, that are just as important to the community as hers. A wife and mother should be the centre around which the home life should revolve, and if she has the knowledge and training that will fit her to become something more than a mere housekeeper, how much more useful a member of society she would be! That some women are not something more than mere housekeepers is the fault of some men. A wife will sometimes ask a question. She will be met with the reply, Oh, it is no use explaining that to you—you would not understand. Men too often forget that a woman's capacity for understanding may be as large as their own (sometimes larger), if the opportunity is given her to develop, but we are not all wives and mothers, and the opportunity comes to many of us to help along the good work. To the wife and mother there is a large field open in the training of her children in trades union principles, in the encouragement she can give to her husband. I very often hear the complaint, My wife objects to me going to the union; it keeps me out at night. The wife can forget this objection in the thought that by faithful loyalty to the union on the part of her husband he is best studying the interests of her children and of her own class generally. If women would grasp the importance of this point we might not have so many lukewarm trades unionists. Those of us who are neither wives, mothers or housekeepers, but have to earn our living, can strengthen the hands of labor organizations and themselves by organizing, too, but there is a way in which all can unite, and I think the most important way of all. In the demand for the union label, we have all the elements that make for success in bettering the condition of the workers. If the label stood for nothing else but the abolition of child labor and a living wage for women, it would be worth the effort to make it a success, but it stands for more than this—it means sanitary conditions for production, it means education for the children, it makes the home life possible; for the working girl it means sufficient wages to live the

healthy, normal life that, under other circumstances, would be impossible. Just to think that women who have it in their power to make all this possible are not doing the duty imposed on them by their husbands, fathers and brothers; that in their suicidal folly they are neglecting to put into effect the method that is so easy!

Women spend from 75 to 85 per cent. of the total earnings of organized labor, and instead of spending it in a way that will give the best returns to the earners, they are giving it back into the hands of those whose interest it is to see that the union label shall not go made a factor in the industrial struggle (for what?) so that you can make it possible for these people to fight those who are nearest and dearest to you in matters that mean one's very existence. Wake up, women of Toronto! Don't sit calmly down and fold your hands and say, Oh, I can't do anything! It is you who can do something; it is you who must do something. You cannot afford to stand idly by and see all that organized labor has worked for go to pieces because of your selfish indifference to one another's interests. Wives, talk union labels to your husbands; find out all you can in connection with them; in the case of the man who is indifferent, although a member of a union, it will awaken interest. Girls, talk union label to your brothers, if you have any; to your lovers, if you haven't brothers. If men see women interested in these great questions they will become more interested. In this way and many other ways you may help along the trades union movement.

M. D.

Toronto, Oct. 27, 1905.

Editor of Women's Column:

Madam,—I would be glad to hear, through your columns, the opinions of some of your readers on the subject of "Men, street cars, and why women have to stand up!"

In the course of the day I have to ride three times—at 12, 12.45 and 6 p.m. At these hours the cars are very crowded.

Now, I very frequently have to stand up; in fact, for the last seven days I have had to stand, together with other women, while at least half the seats are taken up by men. Now and then (very rarely) a gentleman will rise and give me his seat.

What I wish to find out is, Is it the fault of women, or is it due to the bad manners of the men that such a state of affairs exists?

Of course I know that some so-called ladies take a seat offered to them by a gentleman without thanking, or indeed, without even looking at them.

What do you think of it yourself? "The Woman That Stands."

I do not know that it is the fault of either men or women who have to stand in street cars, and more than this, they could, I think, alter this condition if a well organized effort was made in this direction. You must not forget that the men using the cars at the time of

day you mention are mostly workingmen. They are tired, too, and it is just as necessary for them to rest as it is for most women. They (the men) also pay their fare, and are just as much entitled to a seat as women. The complaint should, I think, be registered against the Street Railway Company, who do not provide sufficient accommodation. If men and women would refuse to pay full fare unless provided with a seat, the company would soon provide more cars.

The street cars and busses in the Old Country are only allowed to carry passengers to their seating capacity. The conductors are fined if they carry more than the number. If our City Fathers were up-to-date we would have such a law here; we certainly need legislation of some kind to regulate street car traffic in Toronto.

As for the bad manners of the men, the less said about it the better. Women are equally to blame. If they want the conditions changed so that all can ride sitting down, let them start an agitation along this line, only saddle the blame on the right party.

M. D.

Toronto, Ont., Nov. 7th, 1905.

Women's Department, Tribune:

Dear Madam,—In the last issue of this journal appeared an item signed "Scherzo," making a few strictures on plan mooted by me in the prior issue on the urgency of settlement homes for working women.

To my mind, your correspondent, on the face of things, appears to agree with me. She merely states that working girls should forego present desires for amusement and recreation, in order that she might use the slight cost of such towards the formation of such institutions. From my viewpoint, recreation and amusement are essential necessities to the normal and well balanced mind; that the working girl cannot afford better and more costly means of gratifying same is not her fault, but society is criminal in its studied purpose of damming her to that condition. What do I mean by the word "society"? The factors that control conditions as we find them—the clergy, the legislators, our educators, the subsidized press which is published against working people's interests, the employing class generally, the so-called capitalists of industry who endeavor to crush out all aspiration for a better state of affairs on the part of the discontented in order that their craze for greed and power may go on unchecked. In your five years' study of the working girl it seems to me you should favor anything calculated to improve her moral, physical and mental tone. Imagine girls working for the meagre sum of two dollars per week—which, if you doubt it, we will prove to you—still continuing to have the graces and virtues you attribute to them, and all know them to possess! In spite of what she is up against she remains a pure, whole-souled social creature. Forget that you think I am offended at you. I am pleased that you have given me this chance. You ask me to read up from Genesis to the late war; too long a task for this question, but if I did but see a tithe of the economic, religious, and social difficulties that has beset her at all times, all ages, and at every turn, as one viewing the splendid and glorious creature the working girl of our day is, I bow in deference and honor at her class. Seems to me that you have twisted the causes that have led up to past wars in the main. The loss of life, etc., which they have entailed have had for their object or purpose, not the betterment of mankind on the lines we advocate—better conditions of wages, hours, etc., in their application to industry; broader and fuller education; cleaner, purer and more spiritual conditions of life in every sphere of being—but for conquest, to degrade, enslave for purposes of greed, and to divert the minds of our people, the workers, from their own necessities to false and foreign-made issues. You have read your book to poor purpose if

the struggle of the centuries has not impressed that fact upon your mind. The shallowest pretexts have been sufficient in the past to use as the cause for war. Theology was responsible for much of it; in our time extension of trade, capitalist aggrandizement. The war with the Filipinos for extension will prove the first of my contentions; our own war with the Boers, the latter one. As the editor says, the case you speak of only proves the rule. It is essential for some women workers to do the ordinary work of life; if all girls had the equal ability and knowledge fitted to do the technical and difficult tasks of our ablest woman workers, those who now do the meanest and hardest work would be the best-paid class.

A girl who can lift herself out of conditions which force her to work for four dollars a week, through her own exertions, paying her own expenses, is a modern miracle.

Let us try and aid our women to a higher plane of life on practical lines through the settlement house plan.

Very truly yours,

An Enquirer.

I do not comment on Enquirer's reply to Scherzo, not because it is not worthy of comment, but because I would like to leave it to an abler pen than mine.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Address all communications to Women's Department, office of Tribune, 106, 108 Adelaide street.

Write only on one side of paper.

TRADE UNIONS.

Foster education and uproot ignorance.

Shorten hours and lengthen life.

Raise wages and lower usury.

Increase independence and decrease dependence.

Develop manhood and balk tyranny.

Establish fraternity and discourage selfishness.

Reduce prejudice and induce liberality.

Enlarge society and eliminate classes.

Create rights and abolish wrongs.

Lighten toil and brighten man.

Cheer the home and fireside and

MAKE THE WORLD BETTER.

All wage-workers should be union men. Their progress is limited only by them who hold aloof. Get together, agitate, educate and do.

Don't wait until to-morrow; to-morrow never comes.

Don't wait for someone else to start; start it yourself.

Don't hearken to the indifferent; wake them up.

Don't think it impossible: two million organized workers prove different.

Don't weaken; persistence wins.