Equal Rights

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Virginia Woolf

Feminist Notes

A Woman's Work in Norway

AN "equal pay" story from Norway is evidence of a reactionary wave now sweeping over that land.

For the woman inspector of domestic science in 300 lower schools and the high schools of the country, a beginner's salary of 5,000 kroner is paid and a maximum of 6,500 kroner. A man inspector of about 100 high schools receives an initial salary of 8,500 kroner and a maximum of 10,000. Recently it has been proposed to the committee on salaries that the maximum pay for the woman inspector shall be 8,000 kroner, a proposal recommended by the Department of Education. The reply of the committee and of the Parliament was that the recommendation could not be adopted.

In the debate on the proposal, much was said of the extraordinary service rendered to her country by the present inspector of domestic science teaching, Helga Helgeson, who was credited with founding and giving form to the present effective system of training.

One member of Parliament protested against the action of the committee. "I think," he said, "many will agree that one representative struck the nail on the head when he called this 'woman's work.' It is woman's work! Had a man done the work Froken Helgeson has done, there is no doubt that the situation would have been different. Had the position in the schools been of a more theoretical kind than the practical work this one woman has done, I have no question that the result would have been otherwise."

Partly Equal Pay

THE Irish Free State Civil Service has ruled, according to press reports, that unmarried men and unmarried women shall receive equal pay for the same work. When men marry, however, they automatically receive an increase in pay, whereas when women marry, they automatically lost their positions, with a bonus. Thus it would seem that the policy of the Irish Free State is to encourage men to marry, but to discourage women from marrying. As it requires a man and a woman to make a marriage, such a policy seems rather ludicrous.

Women's Shrine for Sale

IT has been reported to the National Woman's Party that the house in which the first Woman's Rights Convention was held, in 1848 at Seneca Falls, is for sale. This shrine should be preserved as a monument to the work of American women for equality in every aspect of human life.

Women in Russian Public Offices

NEARLY 50,000 women have been elected to public office in Russia, says a dispatch to the Russian Information Bureau in Washington. Of this total, 40,000 are members of the rural Soviets. Women in administrative positions include Lenin's widow (Krupskaya), chairman of the department of political education; Mrs. Trotsky, chairman of the committee for preservation of art museums; Kollontai, ambassador to Norway, and Kamaneva, chairman of the Federal Bureau of Cultural Relations.

Women in British Columbia

A NEWSPAPER writer declares that women in British Columbia "have many rights that women of the United States have fought for vainly."

Among these rights are: Jury service; mothers' pensions; right of a deserted wife to support for herself and her children; equal rights of parents to give or withhold consent to the marriage of a minor; equal age for marriage; equal guardianship of children; economic responsibility on the part of the father of a child born out of wedlock; and certain maternity provisions.

But the newspaper man also lists among "rights" legislation prohibiting women's employment at night, unless other members of her family are the only ones employed by the establishment; the prohibition of women's work for certain wages; and the prohibition of employment of mothers for six weeks before and after childbirth without any provision for the support of the mother during this time.

Little Girls Are Champions

NOW that women have seriously entered the field of sport as competitors with men for the unique glory of physical prowess and skill, the papers are beginning to chronicle seriously the records of the sexes. It is interesting to note that the feats of women are gaining notice, and even the time-honored little girls are gaining ground. The New York *World* sport page reports that in the one-quarter mile rowing race at Denton Lake, Holmes, New York, Betty Monaghan won over Jon Baldwin, Jr., by about five lengths. Both children are six years old.

Japanese Women Lawyers Seek Equality

WOMEN suffragists of Japan, according to reports of the Associated Press, are sponsoring a measure to place women barristers on the same plane as the male members of the bar.

Women in Railway Shops

TWO women are smiths, five are welders, two are laborers, one is a machinist's helper in the Mount Clare shops of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. Most of them were employed during the war, and proved to be such superior workers that they were retained in the redistribution of jobs after the war was over.

The two smiths, who operate steam hammers, are Mary E. Milumas and Amy Fischer, both of whom prefer their present jobs to any other kind of work. Miss Fischer says the work is not monotonous as factory work is, and has greatly improved her strength and health.

Mattie M. Martin, the machinist's helper, keeps house in the hours after she finishes operating a machine that smoothes the inner surfaces of car bearings. She says that before the war she had never done any work except housework, but that after she became interested in mechanics, housework was not enough.

Equal Rights for Women Journalists

THETA SIGMA PHI, national honorary and professional fraternity for women in journalism, is sending copies of an Equal Rights resolution to the schools of journalism. This resolution, adopted at the last convention of the fraternity in Seattle, Washington, in June, urges journalism schools to pay more attention to courses in other aspects of journalism than newspaper reporting, since many women enter other journalistic fields, and demands equal opportunity in the schools and in recommendations for positions upon graduation. Ruby A. Black, one of the associate editors of EQUAL RIGHTS, is editor of *The Matrix*, the magazine published by the fraternity for women in journalism.

Paris Press Club Bars Women

THE Paris Press Club has decided not admit women to membership, by a vote of 77 to 48. Women, however, are not prohibited from raising money for the support of the club. Neither were they relieved from taxes which bought the grounds given the club by the Paris municipality.

Some Greek Women May Vote

BY legislative decree, Greek women more than thirty years old who are able to read or to sign their names will be permitted to vote in communal elections in 1927.

News From The Field

Lawyers' Council Members at Convention

OF the fourteen women members of the District of Columbia Bar who attended the conventions of the American Bar Association and the Women Lawyers' Association, held simultaneously in Detroit, Michigan, during the week just ended, six were members of the Lawyers' Council of the National Woman's Party.

Judge Kathryn Sellers of the Juvenile Court of the District of Columbia and Grace M. Eddy of the Interstate Commerce Commission were the official delegates of the Women's Bar Association of the District of Columbia.

Judge Sellers is the first woman to be appointed a judge by a President of the United States. She was appointed by President Woodrow Wilson and reappointed by President Calvin Coolidge. Miss Eddy is the only woman ever to serve as an examiner for the Interstate Commerce Commission. She assists in the administration of sections of the Interstate Commerce Act dealing with the issuance of stocks, bonds, notes and other obligations by common carriers. She holds the degree of Master of Laws from George Washington University. Miss Eddy is a member of the Lawyers' Council of the National Woman's Party.

Alternates selected by the Women's Bar Association of the District of Columbia, who also attended the convention, were Dora Palkin, one of the most active and successful of the young women members of the District Bar, and Katharine R. Pike, customs expert attorney of the United States Treasury. Miss Pike served on the committee which prepared the handbook of instructions for the customs service in 1923, and is a member of the Treasury Personnel Board. In addition to her work in the customs, Miss Pike is a member of the faculty of the Washington College of Law, teaching administrative law. She is a Founder of the National Woman's Party and a member of its Lawyers' Council.

Emma M. Gillett and Ellen Spencer Mussey, pioneer women lawyers who founded the Washington College of Law, the first white school in the District of Columbia to admit women law students, likewise attended the meeting. Dean Gillett is chairman of the Lawyers' Council of the National Woman's Party.

Several women attorneys in Government service attended the sessions. Among these are: M. Grace McVey, Helen F. Hill, Grace Rohleder, Maud Napier, assistant to the chief counsel of the Federal Power Commission, and Catherine Reaney, a graduate of the National University Law School and one of the latest recruits of the Women's Bar Association. Misses McVey, Rohleder, Napier, and Reaney are members of the Lawyer's Council of the Woman's Party.

Other women lawyers who attended are: Ida May Moyers of the well-known firm of Moyers and Consaul, M. Pearl McCall, assistant district attorney and a member of the District of Columbia Council of the American Bar Association, and Harriet Freebey.

The District of Columbia Women's Bar Association is one of the largest women lawyers' organizations in the United States. It was founded in 1917 by Mrs. Mussey and now has a membership of 108.

Burnita Shelton Matthews, chairman of the Legal Research Department of the National Woman's Party, is president of the Women's Bar Association of the District of Columbia.

Visitors at Headquarters

AMONG recent visitors to Woman's Party Headquarters have been Ethel R. Outland, professor of journalism at Coe College, Cedar Rapids, Iowa; Virginia C. Bedford, superintendent of schools at Thornton, Texas; and Katherine Southerland of Memphis, Tennessee, of the foreign service of the State Department, now on biennial leave in the United States.

The Eternal Male

By Rebecca Hourwich

"AND what are little boys made of?" goes the little poem. We all know the answer. What if we went on with the subject?

"And what are men made of?" The answer might be, "Little boys."

"And what are little boys?" The answer might be, "Little males."

"And what are men?" The answer might be, "Little males grown big males." That leaves us still to determine what maleness constitutes, and along with a lot of other women I spend much of my time wondering, "Well, what is it?"

I find Tess, my daughter's ten-year-old boy companion, is helping me to clear the mystery. Tess leads me to believe that they don't get that way, but are born with it. Just to give them the benefit of the doubt, I would venture that if they are not so inclined at the beginning they follow a pattern of what little men should be, until it makes very little difference whether it is acquired or congenital.

Tess happens to have a jealous and possessive nature—I don't ascribe this to all men. Tess objects to my six-year-old daughter's sharing her time with any other children but his sister and himself. Faith unfortunately likes variety. Daily she tries to sneak in a visit to other children, and each time Tess catches her, and demands an explanation.

"Take your choice," he shouts at her. "It's either Doll and me, or the others. You come with me, or you go with them. You can't play with us and them."

Faith demurs, uses my best manner of patience under sore trial, explains, coaxes and cajoles the storming and irate Tess. All to no purpose. Finally a little wistful, she drags after Tess as he takes her off to their house in the wood, out of temptation's way. So anxious is Tess to keep Faith to himself, he has taken to arriving at our house punctually, immediately after Faith's meals, so that he can whisk her right away with him. After dinner he patiently waits while she takes her nap. Never does he trust her out of sight except at bedtime. The other evening after a particularly stormy day he even arranged with his mother to have Faith spend the night with them; he was exhausted by his vigilance.

Honesty compels me to admit that though it sincerely irks my wilful daughter to be so controlled by another's will, it also gives her great and obvious pleasure to be so important and desired a person.

Sometimes as I get snatches of the conversations from Faith's part of the house, I wonder if perhaps it is not grown people talking, and then again when I next hear grown people, in the light of what I hear from the playroom, I wonder if it is not children.

Were these children grown people, or the eternal play of male or female that I heard today?

"* * * You make me sick, always trying to be stylish. Always trying to be *so* stylish. A lot of fun we can have if you go and put a dress on. You make me sick, just sick, always spoiling the fun trying to be stylish, putting on dresses and everything. Well, if you are going down to the store, for Pete's sake, put that silly purse away. Put it away, I tell you! You look silly. Everybody will make fun of us. And for Pete's sake, fix your underwear so it won't show. Don't you know how to dress yourself?"

Then Tess quietly followed Faith to the store.

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The Right To Be Married

JUST as the news comes from England that Ethel Short has won from the courts the right to retain her position as a teacher from which she was asked to resign because of her marriage, the Washington press reports that the Veteran's Joint Committee has demanded the discharge of married women in government service.

Recently we reported the discharge of married women employed by the City of St. Louis. The first assumption on which these attacks are based is that women, when they marry, should not be permitted to choose whether they shall contribute to the family income by domestic service or by wage-earning outside the apartment or the house.

The second assumption is that the United States Government should apply to its service the principle of "From each according to his ability; to each according to his needs." The veterans making such demands imply that government service is not *service,* but a kind of pension or bonus to be doled out to deserving people.

Will the Veterans, likewise, demand that all men whose wives or mothers or fathers could support them be discharged from the government service?

Both these assumptions are false, of course. As human beings, women have an inalienable right to choose their occupations, limited only by honesty, ability, training, and opportunity, never by government action barring whole classes of them from some kind of work.

The United States Government owes to the taxpayers of the country the most economical expenditure of money. That means that the most efficient employees must, in fairness to the taxpayers, be retained to perform the work of government, regardless of other considerations.

Men and women who have been in the army or navy already have preferred place in the government service. Several points are added to their ratings when they take the Civil Service examinations. If, with this preference, they cannot exceed the rating of married women, certainly it would be an unfairness to the taxpayers who pay their salaries to employ them instead of the married women—or other women—who have, unaided by preferred rating, excelled them.

Mrs. Short, the English woman who was discharged from her position because of her marriage, was found by the court to be efficient as a teacher. This was a proper investigation for the court to make. The court, however, went further and learned that Mrs. Short's husband earned four pounds a week, that she employed a woman to do the housework in the home occupied by her, her husband, and her mother who supervised the establishment during Mrs. Short's absence. While we agree with Mr. Justice Romer, who heard Mrs. Short's case, that the education committee should not concern itself with the financial position of the teachers and their husbands, every such demonstration of the fact that many wives need to earn wages for the support of their families helps to dispel the idea that married women work for avaricious reasons.

Mr. Justice Romer also pointed out that, as between two husbands, of whom one is capable of maintaining his wife and the other is not, the former would be the better able to help provide adequate household service, thus freeing his wife from any pressing concern save that of her profession.

The Vote, organ of the Women's Freedom of England, thus defines the duties of those employing public servants, and to these words we call the attention of the Civil Service Commission and the personnel boards:

"Their sole concern should be to see that those whom they employ at the expense of the community should render the best service possible, and a meddlesome inquisition into their employees' private affairs is entirely outside their province. * * * If a man or woman proves incompetent in the discharge of his or her duties it is the right and the duty of a local governing body, who spends the ratepayers' money, to dismiss that employee; but it has no manner of right to dismiss an employee on account of any personal arrangements of that employee with which the local governing body has emphatically no concern. Moreover, we hope the law will go further, and restrain local governing authorities from making or holding to any stipulation that their women employees shall sign any agreement that they will resign their posts on marriage. It should be illegal for any authority to make such a stipulation. Efficiency alone should be the test for all its employees—whether men or women."

Every member of the National Woman's Party, and all other women interested in freedom, should protest against any effort to deprive women either of their right to choose their occupation or of their right to marry.

New Wings for Old Words

By Olivia Howard Dunbar

ONCE admit actual originality in the work of a woman writer, and that large portion of the consecrated territory of the artist still unconceded to women, significantly shrivels. As we all know, the competence of women writers has not been seriously disturbing to theorists so long as it has been interpreted as the competence of the mere pattern-follower, the perpetual apprentice. It has been understood that aesthetic initiative was a notch beyond women, and everybody has been safe. . . . What, then, is to be made of Virginia Woolf?*

It is true that she is writing her fiction at a moment when experiment itself is the standard, when departures from tradition are not only sanctioned, but almost obligatory. But Virginia Woolf's experiments, resulting in half a dozen already celebrated books, are of a very different order from those superficial remodelings of old methods by means of which a neglected writer uneasily strives to achieve a contemporary accent. Hers are experiments not only highly individual, but rooted in integrity. What this highly self-conscious artist has attempted to do, particularly in her two latest novels, the just published "Mrs. Dalloway" and the earlier "Jacob's Room," as well as in the collection of short pieces she has called "Monday and Tuesday," is to start entirely afresh, to expose her stripped intelligence and perceptiveness to the multiple impression of life as simply and thoroughly-goingly as though novels hadn't been written. Indeed, it is a feature of her individual revolt to assume that not many satisfying ones have been written. Why are there so few good books? she demands, not arrogantly, but with a resolute curiosity. Why is there so meagre a record of what life really is like? Why have writers conspired in pretending that life is orderly or logical or conventionally dramatic when it is really a preposterous wonderland wherein nothing happens that you have been taught to expect, but where the trivial and the stupendous and the heart-breaking and the absurd are senselessly and inextricably confused?

This may suggest a more or less passive method of writing a book. On the contrary, the intention is ruthlessly definite. It may be called a synthetic, as opposed to what we have for so long and so tiresomely called the analytic method. It is furthermore, when compared with the method of Mr. Joyce, for example, highly selective. Virginia Woolf makes no preliminary attempt to cajole her reader or to establish a relation with him. She merely assumes he is there. Then she begins to stab him with subtleties, pelt him with images, dazzle and excite him by presenting a rapid succession of apparently unrelated scenes. His mind does not immediately perceive the intention. But before long something begins to happen to him. The jeweled pieces that his eyes have followed slide together with a charming click. The situation, the relation, whatever it is, now exists for him. And it exists for the sake of an emotion with which he is suddenly saturated.

An aesthetic experience of this sort isn't readily dismissible. You have it forever. You don't slide smoothly away from it as you did from the tops of those rounded tumuli that the older novelists used to construct so painstakingly at fixed points in their stories. It remains a part of you.

BUT the employment of a method is never the whole story. Virginia Woolf has bathed her eyes, to start with, in some truth-revealing ichor that gives her an enormous advantage over the multitudes that take ancient banalities for granted. She herself defines repeatedly in her fiction, particularly in "Jacob's Room," the interesting angle of her vision. She tosses into her text, for example, a little sentence like this:

> "It's not catastrophes, murders, deaths, diseases, that age and kill us; it's the way people look and laugh, and run up the steps of omnibuses."

—Which is not a feverish pardaox, but a way of startling the reader into apprehension of an essential truth. It may be said of many of Mrs. Woolf's sentences, as she says of those of the Greek dramatists, that they "explode on striking the ear."

In the same novel, having evolved a metaphor to indicate the enthralled posture of the artist's mind, she states it with her own peculiar blend of light irony and passionate conviction:

> "But something is always impelling one to hum vibrating, like the hawk moth, at the cavern of mystery, endowing Jacob Flanders with all sorts of qualities he had not at all—for though, certainly, he sat talking to Bonamy, half of what he said was too dull to repeat; much unintelligible (about unknown people and Parliament); what remains is mostly a matter of guess work. Yet over him we hang vibrating."

Furthermore, one realizes very promptly in reading her that Virginia Woolf's equipment is one that would make any experiment of hers worth following. Her knowledge of the inner ways of men and women, her awareness of delicacies perceptible only by a poet, her wit, her penetration as a critic and her astonishing skill with words contribute variously to the fascination of every page she writes. She could scarcely fail to rank as an original writer, even though she had not chosen an original medium. But having chosen it, it is interesting to consider the degree to which she has succeeded.

NOT that one need be too solemn about it. One might merely say of "Mrs. Dalloway," as one said of "Jacob's Room," that it is a bewitching book, and let it go at that. But it would be unfair not to point out, further, that she has achieved a very great lightening and tightening of what she has called "this lumbering and lagging art" of the novelist. There is enormous rapidity of movement, there is swift and singing phrase. It is a method of flashes. Mrs. Woolf perceives sensitively and records exquisitely such verities as are most perceptible, most recordable, in flashes. She is enormously quotable by sentences. Often these are the sentences of a poet whose urge is always to reach what lies just beyond the spoken tone or the visible color. "The leaden circles dissolved in the air," she says, after the great clock has struck the hour.

Her characters, too, she best presents through flashes. They are not the robust permanent embodiments to which tradition has accustomed us. They are even quite charmingly freed from the obligation to be important or strongly typical or even in the usual sense, "interesting." But they are certain to have a quality that makes you feel you have indiscreetly overheard living creatures or still more illegitimately spied upon them. It is with a brilliant economy of words, an inimitable tone of sympathetic mockery that she tells us about Milly Brush in "Mrs. Dalloway"—that "uncorrupted soul whom life could not bamboozle, because life had not offered her a trinket of the slightest value: not a curl, smile, lip, cheek, nose; nothing whatever." Or about Mrs. Jarvis, in "Jacob's Room," who, "short, dark, with kindling eyes, a pheasant's feather in her hat * * * was just the sort of woman to lose her faith upon the moors." Or about Laurette, the reasonable and in-

*"Mrs. Dalloway." Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.50. "The Common Reader." Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.50. "Jacob's Room." Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.00. "Monday and Tuesday." Harcourt, Brace & Company. $1.50.

telligent and charming young woman who lives, for an amazing page only, in a house with ground glass windows where Jacob, like other young men, left shillings on the mantel at leaving.

EVEN more remarkable are the phrases where she is poet and novelist both, where she notes with a beautiful perfection matters that a hundred other novelists might miss altogether. For example:

> "Listless is the air in an empty room, just swelling the curtain; the flowers in the jar shift. One fiber in the wicker arm-chair creaks, though no one sits there."

Or she can arrest your attention irresistibly by merely noting an aspect of May that has been noted countless times before:

> "* * * the trees bowing, the grey spires soft in the blue, voices blowing and seeming suspended in the air, the springy air of May, the elastic air with its particles—chestnut bloom, pollen, whatever it is that gives the May air its potency, blurring the trees, gumming the buds, daubing the green."

There is a very special seduction in the mere rhythm of these light, bounding sentences of hers, with their so often entertaining catalogues of incongruities.

It is in the limitations of such a method as Mrs. Woolf's that its greatest value lies. If one is conscious of being ever so little less beguiled by "Mrs. Dalloway" than by "Jacob's Room" one wonders if that isn't because the new book clings a little less closely to these limitations, is rather more explicit. We first encountered Mrs. Dalloway, and Mrs. Dalloway's husband, in that admirable novel of a few years back, "The Voyage Out." The chattering woman and the pompous husband, passengers from one port of call to another, seemed pretty thoroughly revealed in that earlier story, and it isn't entirely apparent why they have been revived to figure in the new volume, particularly as the dove-tailing does not seem altogether exact. But one is at liberty to take the view that although this is a book about Mrs. Dalloway, it is not so much Mrs. Dalloway as the detail that clusters about her, that predominantly matters. The book abounds in fascination; yet with the slight fable itself one may quarrel more than once. One doesn't understand why, at fifty, the sort of woman Mrs. Dalloway is should still remain under the spell of her meretricious husband. And it occurs to one that Mrs. Woolf has relaxed her own severe code in connection with her hero, Peter. It is uncomfortable to be reminded that Peter is the name always given to heroes, including this one, to indicate that they are awkwardly lovable, the kind that never grows up and all that. Furthermore, this especial Peter, who is of the simple inarticulate type that is always fingering a pocket-knife, and who, recalling his early love for Mrs. Dalloway, stood weeping for a moment by the window, looking "masterly and dry and desolate," "his thin shoulder-blades lifting his coat slightly"—is the sort of man that Englishwomen so often adore in books, but that one doesn't expect a Virginia Woolf to waste words over.

But if that brilliant precise unsentimental art of Mrs. Woolf's has wavered slightly in the case of Peter, it is triumphanty positive in the case of Septimus Warren Smith. For reasons of her own, Mrs. Woolf alternates scenes from the frivolous world of Mrs. Dalloway with scenes from the tragic world of the Septimus Smiths—it is an assumption of the novel that the orbits of the Smiths and the Dalloways infinitesimally intersect. But one almost wishes that it stood alone, this extraordinarily piercing story of Septimus, the victim of war and of unimaginative doctors; and of Lucrezia, the touchingly simple girl who is his wife.

IT looked at the beginning as though Virginia Woolf were doomed to be a writers' writer. It wasn't that her range was narrow, for the contrary was true, but that there was something uncompromising in her excellence that seemed to stand in the way of her ever arriving on a million center-tables. But at present she seems to be overtaken by one of those inexplicable popularities that even the best writers cannot always avoid. Thereby she has also been saved from the alternate danger that unmistakably lurked, that of being known as a woman's writer. It is better, of course, that she should not be thus known, thus limited. But there is probably no writer of equal gifts who has understood so clearly, and phrased so brilliantly, every aspect of woman's life. Women's relation to men, to each other, to the austere world of intellect, to the trivial muddled world of politics and of everyday life—Virginia Woolf's mind is supple enough to perceive all this and sane enough to perceive it accurately. The high fearlessness of the attitude she assumes for women is implicit in all she writes. The thrill and piquancy of sheer truth, the kind of truth that isn't usual in even the most modern disquisitions on women, make many of even her apparently careless statements memorable.

She has been likewise an exceptionally able celebrant of other women in the course of those essays—some of them already familiar to American readers—now republished under the title of "The Common Reader." This highly distinguished volume is dedicated to Lytton Strachey, and its spirit has an obvious kinship with Strachey's, though there is no question of imitation or even derivation. Not even Strachey could approach his material more vigorously and untraditionally. Mrs. Woolf writes of the overwritten ones, George Eliot, Jane Austen, the Brontes, with complete freshness. There are fascinating discussions of lesser names, Dr. Swift's Mrs. Pilkington, the entomologist Eleanor Ormerod. She is deliciously witty, riotously fantastic, in reviewing an inept life of Miss Mitford. But however individual she may be in judgment or bold in phrase, she continues to lead her persuaded reader by the hand. She communicates, that is to say, a fundamental sanity and sympathy that make her conclusions carry powerfully.

By no means all these essays have to do with women. They range from Chaucer to Conrad. They are a substantial contribution to the literature of criticism and brilliant examples of the art of writing. It is her critical power, her keen awareness of what she, as well as other writers, are about, that gives to Virginia Woolf's novels their almost imperceptible structure of delicate steel. Likewise it is the imagination of the poet and novelist that so refreshingly animates her criticism.

What Women Are Thinking

Muriel Pierotti of the Woman's Freedom League (England)

THERE is today a strong tendency to introduce restrictive legislation as regards hours and conditions of work for women in industry on the plea of safeguarding them. Such legislation is dangerous, not only because it can be used as a weapon against equal pay for equal work, but also, by cheapening women's labor, it tends to lower the standard of wages for the whole industry. It is, therefore, urged that restrictive legislation, if necessary, shall be based on the type of work and not upon the sex of the worker.

Sappho's Influence

By Lucy G. Branham

IF the immortal Sappho could have bridged the centuries from 500 B.C. to the present and could have viewed from Mt. Inez or the amphitheatre at Cranbrook the colorful episodes of the National Woman's Party pageants, she would have realized the significance of her ancient prophecy,

"I say some will think of us hereafter."

For Sappho, represented in the pageant as teaching her pupils in her Lesbian school, was one of the principal characters in this story of the evolution of women. To appreciate her as a feminist, as a great educator demanding intellectual opportunity for her sex, is important, but to know her as a poet and dramatist of singular fame, and as a human being who has influenced the structure of both classical and modern literature and poetry, is fundamental. To admit that there is a genius among women is to recognize a biological and scientific fact which can hardly be denied by the most outspoken cynic of the type that always opposes anything that will develop women, and give them social and particularly economic freedom.

There are numerous works on Sappho, but one of the most valuable and informative is "Sappho and Her Influence," recently published by Dr. David M. Robinson of Johns Hopkins University.* Dr. Robinson is Vicker's Professor of Archaeology and Epigraphy, and Lecturer on Greek Literature at the Johns Hopkins University. His ability as a student of Greek literature is demonstrated in this erudite, yet delightful book which has a fascination even for the layman.

THE first chapter discusses some appreciations of Sappho, ancient and modern. Dr. Robinson attempts to disentangle the erotic and degrading picture of the poetess given in the literature of Daudet and Pierre Louys from the appreciation of the modern writer who is a "lover of lyrics" and who is also "a student of Greek literature in Greek."

He quotes Thomas Moore, the Irish translater of Anacron, Symonds and Swinburne, and Tennyson's Princess:

> "Sappho—in arts of Greece vied with any man."

Dr. Robinson says that, in general, antiquity thought of her as "the Poetess'" and the classic estimate holds its own, and more than holds it today. He reproduces many of the Latin and Greek references to her, among them Horace, Pinytus, Possidippus Hermesiainax, who called her the "Nightingale of Hymns." Strabo, Antipater of Thessilonia, Antipater of Sidon, and others were quoted. He includes an epigram supposed to have been taken from the base of a lost statue of Sappho:

> "Sappho my name in song o'er women held
> As far supreme as Homer men excelled."

In closing the chapter he reprints part of the posthumously published appreciation of Swinburne who called Sappho "the supreme success, the final achievement of poetic art" * * * * "the greatest poet who ever was at all."

The following chapter gives a splendid summary of the fragmentary knowledge of Sappho's life. It describes her love affairs, her personality, and her pupils. It distinguishes the real from the unreal Sappho, and is caustically critical of the villainous stories "that reached their climax in the licentious Latin of Ovid, especially seen in Pope's Translation of the Epistle of Sappho to Phaon."

Dr. Robinson says that little is known of her life, and that what we know of her we owe principally to the discoveries of Archaeology since 1898, as the book on Sappho's metres by Dracon of Stratonicia, Chamaeleon's work on Sappho, and *Alcaeus* by Callias of Mytelene have perished and nothing as valuable as these has yet been discovered.

SAPPHO was born on Eresus, of a noble family. They moved to Lesbos, the center of Aeolian culture. She had three brothers who were frequently mentioned in her poems, and her mother and father were both alive when she began to write. Sappho was married and had one or more children, a daughter Cleis. Her husband, Cercylas, a man of great wealth, from the Island of Andrus, died when she was about thirty-five.

Instead of dwelling entirely on the dead past like many widows of her time, and even of the present, she turned to constructive and vital things. In her school for young women she gave instruction to many pupils in the arts, in music and in poetry. The society, Thiasos, was said by Dr. Robinson to be the world's first women's club. Members were bound by special ties and regulations. Women and girls came from Militis, Colaphon, Pamphyilia, Salamis, and even Athens to Lesbos to this famous teacher.

In the chapter on the "Legendary Fringe," Dr. Robinson says that Sappho was no exception to "every outstandiing personality," and has been represented by fanciful writings and grotesque legends. The story of her love for Phaon is patently mythological.

Of the known or extant writings of Sappho, the number of poems and fragments have increased from a hundred and twenty in Volgar's edition in 1810, to one hundred and ninety-one in Edmond's. Sappho wrote many different metres, cult-hymns and odes, marriage songs, scolia or drinking songs, songs of love and friendship. Beside her nine books of lyrics, epigrams, and elegies, none of which have survived, she composed monodies. iambics, and funeral songs like that for Adonis.

The last part of the book is devoted to an analysis of the Sapphic influence on classical and European literature. Dr. Robinson quotes extracts from Greek and Roman writers as well as from the poets of the Middle Ages and of the Classical Renaissance in Italy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He also presents the results of an interesting examination of the works of German, French, English, American, and Russian writers who have used either the Sapphic form of verse, or her ideology, or who have in any way been influenced by the real or mythological Sappho.

The appendix contains reproductions of ancient statues, coins or decorations, which bear Sappho's portrait or verse.

* The Plimpton Press, Norwood, Mass., 1924.

Press Comments

Seven Laws

Jane Dixon, in the New York Evening Mail

A BOOKLET entitled "How New York Laws Discriminate Against Women." Compiled by a nation-wide group of women laboring valiantly for establishment of sex equality.

Front-page, the booklet broadcasts seven laws on the statutes of the Empire State, each one a fluttering pulse beat of those Dark Ages in which woman was regarded as a chattel of man and jurisprudence was administered on the basis of her physical, mental and moral inferiority.

"New York," reads the text, "the boasted center of advanced thought, still does not accord woman civil and political equality with man.

"While the New York statutes disclose

a modification of common law injustices to woman, even today she is subordinate to man, and the two are not co-ordinate. A common prejudice yet prevails against her, and a fair field for her genius and her industry is not open."

Here are the seven points which prove the charge that the vaunted most progressive Commonwealth in the most modern republic on earth refuses to allow equality of opportunity to its citizenry:

"1. Mother's authority over legitimate children is not equal to father's.

"2. Women bear the brunt of burden of illegitimate parenthood.

"3. Married women's services in their homes belong to their husbands.

"4. Women are not allowed to serve on juries.

"5. Men are preferred to women as administrators.

"6. Women in industry are handicapped by discriminations.

"7. Women teachers are denied equal opportunity by school regulations."

Do you know that under the listed rulings the father owns the services and earnings of minor children; that the father alone is entitled to sue for injuries to children?

Do you know that the mother of an illegitimate child is equally responsible with the father for its support; that it takes her name; that she is its parent for practically all purposes and must assume the weight of responsibility?

Do you know that if a wife performs services in her home for persons outside the family, such as taking in boarders or lodgers, the earnings belong to her husband; that she cannot enforce payment for services if she works for him in his place of business?

Do you know that the husband's domicile controls the wife's; that the widow's share in her husband's property is often less than the widower's share in his wife's property?

For your own information investigate the laws governing women who work in your own community.

Then get out and work against this discrimination in which justice or the rights of the individual have no part.

If we share the responsibility of citizenry, then we are entitled to the privileges of citizenry.

Feminist Debates in 1780

London
Morning Post

IN the year 1780 debates on set questions were the chief diversions of the *Ton*. The fashionable assembly rooms, such as Carlisle House, Soho-Square, Mr. Greenwood's rooms in the Haymarket, the Casino in Great Marlborough Street devoted one or more evenings a week to debates. Cox's Museum, in Spring Gardens, so well described in "Evelina," became the Oratorical Hall, and the King's Arms at Kensington set up the Female Congress. The debates were for men only, mixed, or for women only. The two latter attracted large and fashionable audiences. There were apparently no star speakers. Any man or woman who wished to take part in the discussion was asked to sit in the center of the hall. The galleries were reserved for women exclusively, the body of the hall being open to both sexes.

The subjects to be debated were advertised in the *Morning Post,* and make interesting reading:

"The University for Rational Amusements, Casino, No. 43, Great Marlborough street. This evening will commence the first sessions of

THE FEMALE PARLIAMENT.

"The Debates to be carried on by ladies only, and a lady to preside in the chair.

"Question for this day.—Is that assertion of Mr. Pope's founded on justice which says 'Every woman is at heart a rake?'

"The doors to be opened at seven. The Chair to be taken at eight. Admittance 2s. 6d. Refreshments of tea, coffee, capellaire, orgeat, etc., included."

It is well worth noting that these debates, which were not taken very seriously at the time, gave women one of their first opportunities of voicing their political aspirations.

Here are a few of the subjects debated:

"What reason can be assigned for precluding the fair from the privilege of civil society, or from a liberal participation in their discussions?" (A mixed debate.)

"Would it not greatly conduce to connubial happiness if the means of total separation were less difficult than at present, and within the abilities of all ranks and situations?"

Many other questions discussed show a reaching towards full civil rights for women. Among lighter topics are some reminiscent of our "Silly Season."

"Was Adam or Eve more culpable in Paradise?"

"Do the manners of the ladies in the present day tend more to invite the gentlemen to—or deter them from matrimony?"

"Is the Diffident or the Resolute the most persuasive lover?"

"Is not a liberal acquiescence with the prevalent fashion in the improvements of the person as necessary as an attention to the cultivation of the understanding?"

"Whether the depravity of the times is owing to dissipation in the men or levity in the women?"

"Which is the better preservative of female virtue, freedom or restraint?"

"Is the effeminate man or the masculine woman the more contemptible character?" The "masculine woman" of that year, it may be remarked, was one who wore certain newly-invented undergarments, irreverently referred to in the *Press* as "bricks" or "breeks."

Two Million Dollar Fund

Treasurer's Report

EDITH AINGE, *Treasurer*
NETTIE TRAIL: *C. P. A., Auditor.*

RECEIPTS of National Headquarters, December 7, 1912, to August 15, 1925, $1,307,042.74.

Contributions, membership receipts and other receipts, August 15, 1925, to August 29, 1925:

Miss Marion Sayward, Ohio	$1.00
Miss Katherine Southerland, D. C.	2.00
Mrs. Marian Koogler Phillips, Ohio	150.00
Miss Emma Wold, D. C.	10.00
Mrs. William Hull, Pa.	5.00
Mrs. Victor duPont, Sr., Del.	10.00
Albert Levitt, Va.	1.00
Dr. Mary O'Malley, D. C.	10.00
Mrs. Irene Krome D. C.	1.00
Per Pennsylvania Branch (Pa. Branch retaining half of dues):	
Miss Anna Pennypacker	25.00
Mrs. Marian N. Kirlin	5.00
Per New Jersey Branch (N. J. Branch retaining half of dues):	
Miss Mildred V. Palmer	.50
Mrs. Christine V. Helmsen	7.50
Mrs. Max Levy, La.	25.00
Mrs. Julia Wilson Tamme, N. Y.	1.00
Mrs. Minna Pfefferkorn Marvici, N. Y.	1.00
Mrs. Edwin G. Davis, Colo.	20.00
Mrs. Townsend Scott, Md.	15.00
Mrs. Esther Lowe Gordon, N. Y.	10.00
Mrs. Lois G. Greer, Vt.	1.00
Rent of Rooms at Headquarters	21.00
Sale of literature	2.00
Telephone receipts	.65
Refund on electricity from Potomac Electric Power Co.	429.18
Total receipts August 15, 1925, to August 29, 1925	$753.83
Total receipts, December 7, 1912, to August 29, 1925	$1,307,796.57