

or foreign returned student and the village maid or vice versa has been the prime reason for the many unhappy marriages of the past twenty years.

Many intelligent, educated women, instead of taking up work of their own and caring for babies and the home, make their husband's work their own. They remain at home, but keep abreast of the world and of their husband's work. Their husbands share their work with them and depend upon their opinions and analysis of work. Oftentimes the results of business transactions have been their doing, and yet they are clever enough to let their husbands think it is the latter's own work.

Chinese women have never been slaves of the men, so the term emancipation of women is wrongly applied. As if the women were entirely under their subjugation with no rights, no will to do what they wished! The educated women, who are recognized as able to do things for themselves and to think for themselves are always at a liberty to do as they desired themselves. The trouble, as one man put it, is in the woman's own indifference to do things outside of their husband's life and their own. They care much less to assume responsibility and position of their own among the women.

Of course there are many women who are enslaved to country life and its work, just as men are tied down to it up to the present day. Even among this group there

are to be found women who stand in positions as high as the men, or higher, by ability, mentality and education.

History hands down stories of beautiful, intelligent, and clever women who had their places among men. Of the lesser known cases among the middle classes, women ruled in the family without having made history. This leads one to stop and analyze what makes up a leader. No one person can rule a group of persons unless he or she is higher mentally, morally, and physically than the rest, who will recognize it. Whether it is a man or a woman, he or she will be looked up to, if his or her ability is above that of the others. This all goes to show that equality on the basis of character and intelligence is and was ever a factor in the life of men and women in China.

The difference between the past and today lies in the fact that more women go out into the world in the pursuit of art, business and profession, more openly while previously things had to be done with great caution, as it was not fashionable to put to use one's innate ability.

Today there are men and women in all walks of life in all the occupations China has to offer. There is no doubt that women in these positions and in the homes enjoy the same liberties that the men do, now as before.

The Married Woman's Problem

(A Letter)

By A MARRIED WOMAN

DEAR Sisters: Please do not for one moment think that I am imitating Dorothy Dix. For I am not. And if you must have my frank opinion, let me tell you I dislike Dorothy Dix and her letters—in fact any letter box that appears in the dailies. Think that you can solve other people's problems, especially those of a married woman's! Now, to be more frank, and that may astonish you, I do not even believe in such a thing as woman's column, woman's page, or woman editor. It is childish to divide men and women into two hemispheres and say, there, you stay and rule, men, and there you, women, abide and have dominion! But, "Then", you ask, "why do you write us a letter about the married woman's problem? You seem to contradict yourself."

The reason, then, is to oblige the editors of *The China Critic* who still believe that women are women and that there must be a special issue on them.

I have often heard married men say that if they could have their lives lived again, they would remain single. I should think if married women were asked the same question, 50 per cent of them, perhaps, (that is, if it be understood to cast no reflection on their husbands), would say they wish they were never married. This is, of course, too sweeping a generalization, and it may be, in both cases, said in jest.

However, problems of married life do exist. Take the family as an institution for example. Formerly the large family system which crowded aunts, uncles, grand-

parents and grandchildren together like sardines in a tin can, but none too peacefully, caused the ruin of many a married life. Time has changed. Small families have grown in place of the large ones. Married couples start life single-handed, without the help of their elders, nor, also, their interferences. But alas! in-law's still come. For it must be remembered the parents of our generation are yet the product of "feudalism." They have not looked upon the freedom of their sons and daughters-in-law without disapproval and, perhaps, jealousy. Their place as a mother-in-law which they could have occupied had their sons not gone abroad or to the universities to breathe the spirit of new learning, never loses its attraction and glory for them. So they descend upon their daughters-in-law with even greater fury and severer vengeance. Now, it seems all daughters-in-law dislike, if not hate, their mothers-in-law. I suppose it is just like "all the world loves the lover," so the whole kingdom of wifehood recoils before the mothers of the husbands. But really it is only natural that there can be no love between the daughter-in-law and the mother-in-law, that is to say, the husband cannot expect his wife to love his mother just as the wife cannot expect him to love hers. Love is developed through mutual help and understanding and is a product of years of friendship. A mere relation is no guarantee for goodwill. Filial piety has never been love, but only a form of etiquette and propriety.

There are, of course, cases where the two parties can

live together very well. But I also know an individual case where the parents refuse to support their son and his wife on the ground that if he is "modern" enough to choose his own wife, he should be "modern" enough to be self-supporting. This sounds very reasonable. So the son does not ask for his parents' help. A few years later, when things went on rather well for him, the parents came bringing with them their other sons and daughters, and said, "Surely you can see them through college. Or, why should I have a son who cannot amuse his parents in their old age, or help his sisters and brothers in their school days?" This may be a purely financial question. But think of the wife who out of her own effort has made a home of comfort and delight, and then suddenly have a horde of in-law's descend upon her! The sad plight of many an unfortunate wife, then, is that she has to play the role of both—the companion of her husband, sharing his burdens and duties, and the daughter-in-law of someone who, though not giving, exacts a payment in return. You see, we are still standing on the threshold of the old and new. The two must clash, and we are the victims.

In-law's, however, do not constitute the only problem of a married woman. Sometimes the husband is more than the wife can handle. But personally I do not believe in the very idea of handling the husband. If diplomacy and tactics must be employed in the relation between the husband and the wife, then the very foundation of marriage is at stake—that very marriage is a total failure. Someone has complained to me that her husband no longer pays her the attention that he used to before they were married and that he no longer tries to please her. She complains that he comes home after work very tired and that all he does the whole evening long is lying down on the sofa, silent and sullen. Perhaps all is not well between them. But the wife, I am afraid, is partly to blame. She is too idealistic. She does not realize that the sentimental lover must give way to a matter-of-fact husband and that she must not expect her husband to stand on ceremony all his married life long!

Another so-called serious-minded wife is wearing herself out because she has to be with her husband whenever he goes out. It seems that the husband has taken a fancy to dancing. The wife, in order to prevent him from seeking the society of dancing girls, accompanies him to cabarets, contrary to her puritanic moral beliefs and conceptions. Besides, her nightly excursions have also been detrimental to her household work. For, if the father

feels the lure of the music, the children must go to bed without a bath! This life of always being diplomatic and tactful—to your own husband, mind you—is a pathetic one. I am afraid all conversation will have to be a strategy, and the boudoir a fortification. I do not know if the husband is even worth having who prefers the society of an ignorant dancing partner to that of an intelligent wife.

This does not mean, of course, that the wife must have fish for dinner if the husband likes pork better. Deliberate irritation to the feelings of either the wife or the husband is a danger to married life. Speaking of food, I must say men are yet slave to their stomach. There will be more happiness in the home if the women are a little more domestic. Modern house-keeping is such that the wife hardly knows what is being cooked in the kitchen or what is to be served on the table. It is often held as below the status of the mistress if she should nose into the kitchen. All matters of ordering should be left to the cook. This is considered as "aristocratic." But really dieting must not be left to the pleasure of the cook. The wife must see to it that only wholesome food are brought to the table. No matter how busy she may be, she must find time for that. After all a domestic wife goes farther than the social partner.

Yet, after all is being said, the most important factor in a married life is whether or not you are happy, for the end of life is happiness. And if your husband is happy to have the in-laws live with him, or is pleased to have you play with him, or is satisfied with kitchen food, then why should you worry? You, in marrying a man, must necessarily want that man to be happy. And if that man has no respect for your feelings, your ideas, or beliefs, then you have only yourself to blame, then your married life is not conceived of on sound basis. Unless you want to seek the benefit of a divorce court, make the best of the mess. That is why we have so many mediocre husbands and mediocre wives.

All this you may not agree with me, no, not in the least perhaps. But you must agree with me that I am frank, or that I dare to be frank. I may be causing a controversy; but that is so much the better. Let us discuss the matter in open.

I am,

Yours,

A MARRIED WOMAN

Chinese Women's Activities

By Mrs. K. S. WONG-SHUN (孫王國秀)

AT the present time, before the law, Chinese women are placed on the same level with men. They are free to enter into political, judicial, educational as well as financial fields. They are no longer fettered by conventions and rules. In theory, our women have gained their emancipation.

However, observations tells us that reality is quite

different from theory. Our women's emancipation movement is still in its infancy. It is true that a few women who have the opportunity of receiving high education are either doing some educational work, or are sharing some kind of intellectual activity. But their number is so limited that one can easily count them on one's fingers! To this list, one may also add several of the