

Women's Liberation Movement

We bring out below a paper, which was presented by the PTS students of the school of nursing, St. Thomas Hospital, Changanacherry, Kerala. It is quite encouraging that even the fresh entrants to the nursing profession could participate in the celebrations of the International Women's Year so effectively. Nurses hold a key position in bringing about the changes in the social structure and success of liberation movement in our country.

—Ed.

Ever since Adam blamed Eve for his fault men are going on blaming women for all troubles in the world. Even in the early centuries, women realised this, and they came up to fight against this. But it is only recently they have understood the necessity of a Liberation Movement to acquire a social equality.

The Liberation Movement first started in Western Europe. But it has its different meaning in Asia. The first and foremost aim is to liberate women from the harmful dependence on men. It is to emancipate women from the back breaking work, low pay, superstitions and cultural taboos. It is to liberate the people from the structures of an unjust order and to develop the country as a whole. What a woman wants is the freedom of mind. She has become the slave of man and has thought of him as someone superior. Liberation is impossible in a situation of captivity as woman is the slave of man. There is need for a common understanding of the role of the woman in the society and this is possible only by a movement. A serious evaluation of what can be done should be made in order to promote a better world for women, who are neglected, and treated as second class human beings. The Liberation Movement will help to find out ways to help them and save them from the passive servitude.

Role of women in the society

Woman is an integral part of the society. The Society is nothing, but a wider family, each member has his own obligations as well as privileges. Unless a woman understands her own importance, deve-

lopment of an ideal and peaceful society is impossible. She should realise her own importance and the vital role, she has to play in the society. Also she has to recognise her contribution to the development of friendly relations and co-operation for the strengthening the world peace.

The moto of the Liberation Movement is "Equality, Development, and peace." Also, it is to ensure the full participation of women in the total development efforts.

Obstacles in achieving the goals

Mainly four obstacles are there, in the achievement of the goals, these are (i) lack of identity, (ii) prostitution, (iii) Women being treated as objects and (iv) lack of co-operation among women organizations. Women are considered to have a minor role to play in the society. The pathetic truth is that, even she does not know her own worth. Prostitution leads to the domination of man's power. When woman is considered as an object, man also does not realise the necessity for a dialogue. There should be concerted efforts by all the women's organisations to help this strata of women.

The organization of such a movement must be carefully worked out—a strategy towards the problem. The movement should be strong and effective. It should be officially recognised by the Government in order to have a strong impact on the people. Each woman should be aware of the existing injustice, within the socioeconomic structures and between the two sexes. All the solutions must be broad and open to people of all levels. The

solution will be easier if we start with an inventory of the existing international standards. Compare the situation of one's own with other nations. Then compare it between man and woman. Thus we can understand the existing division of labour, inequality and injustice between the two sexes.

The main problem is of a system, which imprisons human beings and offers them no reward or freedom. They lead a life of unconscious commitment without any reward. It is often woman who has to work hard to feed the increasing mouths, she is more affected than anybody else.

Women are not denied of the property since it is channeled through dowry system. But this does not guarantee them any decision making power, because man is most of the time, the official enterpriser. Women are only theoretically property owners, the real powers of disposal goes to men. The women have to put an end to this over power of man on his wife's property. She should have the right to determine what she would like to do with her own property.

Boys are given priority over girls when it comes to even in formal education. The educational system should aim at creating equality between men and women. Equal Opportunities should be given to both men and women.

Liberation of nurses

From Joan of Arc to Florence Nightingale, history is rich with women's influence. Though the attempts of Florence Nightingale were mainly for the reformation of nursing, it has affected the woman

world as a whole since it helped to improve the status of women. But inspite of all her attempts nursing is still considered to be a profession of low status.

Nursing is a profession which calls its overwhelming majority from the female world. So the nurses have a tremendous influence on the developmental efforts. She has the responsibility for initiating and supporting action to meet the health needs of the country.

Liberation movement in India

The status of Indian women depends upon the caste to which she belongs. The higher and lower caste had entirely different views about women and their social standing. There could hardly be any discussion or discrimination as regards to women in the lower groups.

From the early Sanskrit literature, it is clear that the position of women grew worse as the caste system became more and more rigid. It was within the groups integrated into the Hindu social orders that women enjoyed most freedom.

For those who wished to improve their social standing, there were two possibilities on the one hand, individual status within the caste could be raised. On the other hand, the entire caste would move up a step in the social system. In both cases women were involved in the first, directly and in second, indirectly.

The most common and important way of raising a family's status was by arranging the marriage of a female to a man of higher caste.

In Modern times, Mahatma Gandhi considered women as com-

petent as men. He exhorted the women to apply methods, which suit the Indian disposition and environment instead of Western methods.

As 1975 is declared as the International Women's Year, to think about the various responsibilities and obligations of a woman as a nation-builder is undeniable and to launch the Liberation Movement in all the countries of world may have some fruitful outcome and have more impact.

The emblem for the liberation movement is designed by Mrs. Valerie Pettis. It presents a stylized dove, which is the symbol for peace, the biological symbol for woman, and also a mathematical sign for equality.

NURSE : IN MY VIEW

Look there, a glorious building,
With lots of belle roaming,
In their pure white frocks,
A reflection of their hearts,
Oh ! they are always fully busy,
Yet look their attire pretty,
With a smile on their lips,
And a belgard in their eyes.
Among the lamenting patients,
Roam round with her patience,
Her words of comfort and sooth,
Removes the pain of patients.
Wipe off the tears of agony,
Show the head light of happiness.
Like a loving missionary,
Thro' the path of endless glory,
By the love and strength of will,
Not plagued by thoughts evil.
Clear out the meaning of 'philanthropy,
Oh ! what a noble job is this
Thro' the worship of God as His
Make the service a useful one
By her devoted life and love.
And among the patients life as angel,
Unravel the fear from mind of all,
Assure her help in there needs,
Foster them to achieve mental peace.
Oh ! Her eyes shining with satisfaction,

Her look as 'cool as cucumber',
But as keen as a genius,
Touch as soft as 'cotton swabs',
Smile of Joy, which will not vanish,
Take off worry from their faces,
Sigh ! the nurse, the patients' goddess,
Still remains the heaven of happiness.

RACHELAMMA M.S.

1st year B.Sc. (N) Student
College of Nursing,
Medical College,
Trivandrum.

