

THE POOR—NAPOLEON—WOMEN AGAIN

I often think the poor are like children who have never grown up. It is a common charge against a certain proportion of adults (far too large) that they have children's minds; that their bodies developed after twelve, while their minds did not.

The poor may be likened, also, to a man who has worked at a trade all his life, and never learned it. Life

is a trade, with foremen and superintendents of super skill because of experience or intelligence.

Napoleon never cared much if his wives had lovers . . . But it makes a common man mighty mad.

For more than a hundred years there have been attempts to explain Napoleon Bonaparte . . . I can explain him in half a dozen lines: In the dirt of love, passion, life, he pick-

ed up at birth marvelous genius as a soldier—as Charles Dickens picked up marvelous genius as a novelist. As age advanced, both men lost their power; youth was a part of their marvelous combination, and, without it, both said and did things that would have disgraced the commonest fool . . . I say to you that heredity is the greatest thing in life. If you are not doing well, either you are wrongly placed or are not behaving yourself in the ordinary essentials.

It is frequently said there has not been, in all history, a woman philosopher; one distinguished for correct and candid thinking, as may be said of hundreds of men.

What does this mean? Certainly not that women do not engage deeply in life, and thereby gain sufficient knowledge to become reflective. Does it mean that women, in private and print, refuse to acknowledge the facts of life? I have known less than a dozen really candid women; I have rarely known a man of average intelligence who was not. This difference cannot be accounted for by sex. The brains of men and women must average about the same.

It may be a poor guess, but I believe the difference due to this: Since the dawn of civilization certainly, and possibly somewhat earlier, women have been flattered; that has been man's weapon in soliciting their favors; on the other hand, men have perpetually traveled the war path, and know the truth about themselves. Men are actually better than the public estimate of them, for libels told by opposing warriors have come down to us with history, along with the exaggerated compliments for women. There is no page of print, old or new, not overpraising women and criticising men more than they deserve.

Men are candid, and become philosophers occasionally, because long experience has convinced them of the practical value of truth; women, who never become philosophers, still believe truth distorted in the interest of women, may be of value to them.

Candid thinking seems to have paid the men: of the things in life said to be great, the men have as great a lead, almost as in philosophy.

Would candid thinking pay the women?

I do not know. It may be that their best plan is the one they have adopted even though there is not philosophy in it.

Hence Channel Swimmers
Last year 466 New Yorkers were drowned on the various beaches near the city. Of those only 21 were women.—The American Magazine.



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