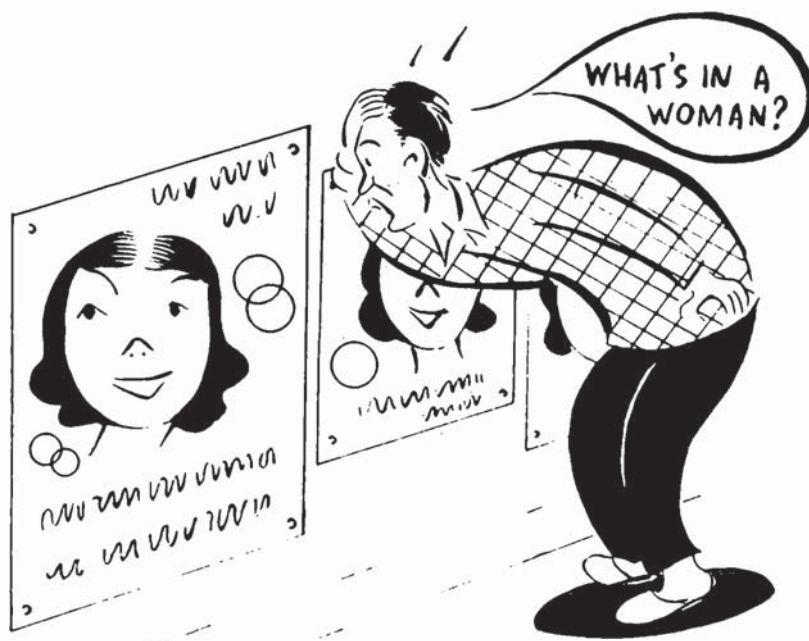


NATURE must have been in a capriciously generous mood when she created woman. Or else she would not have endowed this skirted, half-angelic biped in high-heels with such a prodigious amount of indefinable charms that make her the most talked-about creature this side of the flying saucers, the H-line, the H-bomb, or the recent solar eclipse.

Exaggerating, you say? By no means. In fact we haven't even said half of it. For not only has woman fascinated the world of man for numberless centuries but she has also exerted a profound influence in shaping the destinies of



What Is This Thing Called Woman?

men ever since this world began. And that's no mere glibberish, either. Big statements, no doubt. But they also happen to be true. The Holy Bible itself testifies to that effect. We know only too well the tragedy which befell old man Adam on account of Little Miss Mischievous. Come to think of it. Suppose there had been no such creature called Eve? Life would have been simply grand, wouldn't it? Most certainly. But we doubt whether Adam would have agreed with you. Ever tried imagining a field sprawling upon miles and miles of cornstalks with not a single blossom in it to arrest your eye? Try it sometime.

The truth is further made manifest and illustrated in glaring clarity not only in the Holy Scriptures but also in our history, myths, and legends. Their very pages boast of women who, in more ways than one, held the fate of empires in their palms. There was Helen of Troy, for instance, famed in song and story as the girl with "the face that launched a thousand ships and burned the topless towers of Ilium." And there was Castile's Queen Isa-

In the beginning, said a Persian poet — Allah took a rose, a lily, a dove, a serpent, a little honey, a Dead Sea apple, and a handful of clay. When he looked at the amalgam — it was a woman.
— WILLIAM SHARP

bella, England's Elizabeth I, Catherine de Medicis of France, Empress Catherine II of Russia, Maria Theresa, Queen of Austria and centuries ago in Egypt a Cleopatra—one and all were women of such all-pervading influence as to lead one historian to exclaim of the latter, "Had Cleopatra's nose been an inch

longer, the face of the world would have been changed!"

Why, then, you ask, what is it about this thing that makes it so interesting? Just what is this thing called woman?

When a female infant, so the wise birds tell us, sheds off the last remnants of its baby clothes and has successfully graduated from pigtails to an Italian hair-do, it becomes a woman. A woman is a piece of skin stretched over a bundle of king-sized question-marks held together by exclamation points. She comes in varied combinations of shapes, sizes, colors, and trimmings. She may be a dark-haired lass with the veil and fan. She may be a cute little thing with long golden braids, white cap, and wooden shoes. Perhaps, she is a tall red-headed Venus in a business suit. Or perhaps, she is a shy brown goddess in a saya and bakya. But in whatever package she comes in, she always remains true to what she is: a creature destined to fascinate and inspire.

(Continued on page 14)

by

L. AMIGABLE

THE PEN AND I

(Continued from page 11)

little beads of perspiration came trickling down my forehead. I was getting furious at myself for not being able to write a whole story yet. I had racked my brain for another new plot; but it seemed I was spent. I looked out to the spot where a while ago had moved my heart and hand hoping that its beauty might re-captivate me again. What I saw was the final straw. Nowhere was the bird that was chirping a soothing song a while ago. The flowers were now drooping under the stinging heat of the sun. A butterfly or two could now be seen flying lifelessly. The lilies had slowly and completely shied away from the sun. The fishes kept to the bottom of the pond. They too, were escaping the heat of the noon-day sun. The wonderful backdrop was no longer pale blue but a glaring blue which made me squint. Where was the music, the poetry and a hundred other little things which had fooled me into thinking that I could be a great authoress someday? Instead I felt warm; and in no time I lost my temper. I gathered the crumpled bits of paper strewn carelessly on my desk and burned them mercilessly. . . until the last flame flickered and died. With it, my visions of fame and fortune as an authoress died too. I hated myself for having been such a miserable failure and I hated my friend who said writing a story was just nothing at all. Maybe in a way he was right—it was nothing at all. Writers are made—not born. Indeed? Just wait till I meet her. I'll give her a piece of my mind.

—oOo—

"My husband talks in his sleep—does yours?"

"No. He's terribly annoying—he just chuckles."

—oOo—

"Of course I'm not married," said she. "I'm nobody's fool."

"Then," said he, hopefully, "will you be mine?"

—oOo—

Girl (arriving late at game)—

"What's the score, Larry?"

Escort—"Nothing to nothing."

Girl—"Oh, goody!! Then we haven't missed a thing!"



wits & jokes

Dancing the rumba is a way of waving goodbye without moving your hand.

—Galen Drake (CBS)

Each time Frank Murphy drove his car over 80 miles an hour, the motor set up a terrific knocking. He finally took it to a garage for a check-up.

The mechanic looked the car over carefully, but couldn't find a thing wrong with it. "At what speed did you say the car knocks?" he asked.

"Eighty."

"Nothing wrong with the car," the mechanic stated flatly. "It must be the good Lord warning you."

As we packed for a vacation trip through Canada, I recalled what a friend who had visited there recently had told me.

"We'll have to take different clothes than usual," I remarked. "They say nobody there wears jeans."

My junior high daughter, looking incredulous, asked: "Not even the girls?"

—Mrs. B. de Boer in PEN

Relax. Don't worry about the job you don't like. Someone else will soon have it.

—Herald-Advocate

A handful of patience is worth more than a bushel of brains.

Dutch Proverb

Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow ye diet.

William Gilmore Beymer

The empty vessel makes the greatest sound.

Shakespeare

Noise proves nothing. Often a hen who has merely laid an egg cackles as if she laid an asteroid.

Samuel L. Clemens

Everything comes if a man will only wait.

Israeli

What is this Thing . . .

(Continued from page 37)

beast. . . a mere heap of shapeless, pulseless matter."

Just what have we accomplished by all these? We can't say we have done something monumental to make the world sit up. . . that's glaringly obvious. Neither can we say we didn't try our best. At any rate, this should make man look upon woman with a more tolerant eye and accept her as she is. Moreover, this proves beyond all doubt what we have said at the beginning: Woman is a most inexhaustibly fascinating subject, just as she shall always be for milleniums to come. Hargrave clearly sums up the whole argument in these words: "Women are the poetry of the world just as the stars are the poetry of heaven. Clear, harmonious, and light-giving, they are the terrestrial planets that govern the destinies of men."

Come to think of it, why do they call it a man's world?

"Invitation to Yesterday"

(Continued from page 37)

strange mixture of dread and longing. But did he, when he first spoke his first tender word to her? Did he understand the weakness that numbed his frame then? Did he understand the breathless thrill when her fingers first accidentally touched his?

The old woman saw him close the door, gently. Wondering and surprised at the sudden soft ease of the same slam-happy hands, she whispered to herself: Now, I wonder why he didn't! She leaned out from a window. She saw him cross the street, and shoving aside the swinging doors, entered the drug store.

She could not hear him say to the operator: 998-R please? Nor heard his hesitant, guarded query of the crooning, girlish voice that answered, nor hear his voice in hal-lowed conversation tremble, for if she had, she wouldn't have asked herself; she would have understood the sudden mildness in him; and would have known the poignant tale behind those three numbers and the letter "R" that adorned his bedside wall.