

PROBLEMS OF THE YOUNG WOMAN GRADUATED.

We most admit that the so-called "conquest" of women to-day are only pseudo conquest, for it is certain that in most countries women have attained such high status in the social order that they are considered equal to men, it is no less certain that they have not been freed from a series of situations to be faced - when on making use of those legitimate rights, they also demand their natural rights, those which were given to woman from the beginning of the world, through the goodness of God.

Therefore it is not strange that the problems of every sort which affect her should doubly affect as woman and as professional and for that reason she most realise the advantages and disadvantages which that duality automatically creates.

In the organization of modern society woman plays an important role, we can say that the time when the woman was only a slave to the desires and laws of men has almost passed, and it is precisely Christ who redeems woman from that slavery and raises her to the rank of man's companion; it is precisely Christ who gives her dignity and places her in the position which is her due; then it is to Christ that woman today must turn to find the solution to her problems. He has progressed in the social field, but we cannot forget that there is danger in this march towards progress, we live in an epoch of exaggeration and confusion - on the one hand concessions are made and on the other the maternity, primary mission of woman is ignored, the high social function which derives therefrom and the decisive importance in society of the fulfilment of this task. Today then woman is placed amid a welter of "conquests" which affect her family and professional life her civic activities, etc. This aspect, the carrying out of her professional work is the object of the present paper.

In order to base our study on reality we (UNION DE UNIVERSITARIAS CATHOLICAS) - made a survey among the young women graduates of different university faculties belonging to different social or religious groups to whom we gave a board questionnaire embracing the points with which Commission F is concerned. We personally interviewed the heads of women's organizations university as well as exchanging impressions with teachers in different university faculties. We have also incorporated the invaluable report of the Spiritual Director of the Movement of Intellectual and Professional Catholics, recently organized in our country and in whose work we are so confident.

When we study the problems of the young w-g we most point out that most of the problems affected both the un-married and the married graduate although with the latter it is certain that if she is mother of family the crisis is more acute - and the consequences more serious since the balance which should exist between the full development of woman's vocation of wife and mother and the exercise of a profession is often destroyed.

The first difficulty which the young woman graduate meets on beginning her professional work is economic and this for various reasons:

- 1.- Lack of suitable jobs due to two factors - a surplus of graduates and the lack of adequate guidance in choosing a university career. For although woman has access to all professions in our country not all can be practised with the same success. It is generally accepted that woman are more suited for letters than for Engineering or Medicine for example, and for science graduates it is easier to practise those with a teaching bias, not only because they allow her more freedom to devote attention to activities proper to her sex.
- 2.- Inadequate remuneration this is an obstacle not only for graduate woman but for every woman who must work to maintain her relatives or her own family. Perhaps the root of the evil lies in poor social organization, or in the community or perhaps in those factors which we mentioned at the beginning. Concessions are made and obstacles then placed in the way of their enjoyment. She is not sufficiently paid; she does not receive the same treatment as a man in the same position and unfortunately in many cases employers prefer women in order to pay them less. In Government post, salaries are usually better but not adequate, and in private job the remuneration depends on existing exploitation.
- 3.- Difficulty of establishing oneself in practice in most cases when the young woman graduate tries to open her own office or set herself up in private practice she meets with far greater difficulties than her masculine counterpart especially in careers like Medicine, Law, Dentist, etc. In such cases a man is accepted more

easily and received with greater confidence, and therefore can establish himself more easily. Once more we see the need for adequate guidance when choosing a career to reduce those obstacles which a woman will find on exercising her profession.

Another difficulty encountered more frequently in our interviews was that adaptation to work. Here we must point out that our system of university education is directly responsible for the problem -- there are enormous gaps in our studies which have to be filled in to meet scientific and technological development. And so when the young woman graduated comes up against the reality of practicing her profession, she realizes that the knowledge acquired at the university is only a caricature, and not the real profession which she chooses, and that she has received neither the moral or cultural education necessary for her profession.

Problem of social adaptation here as in the previous case the responsibility falls for the most part on the system of education and again the lack of guidance when choosing a career. In our universities it is too easy to enter it a minimum of social background and mental and psychological fitness is not required. And although we believe that the right to education should not be limited to those in easy economic circumstances and that therefore the State and the University must be prepared to educate those who cannot economically educate themselves we also believe that the University must demand certain minimum requirements of all those who wish to study at the university.

Moral Problem. One which affects most the woman young graduate. Apart from our Catholic University, we rarely find a University curriculum which give the necessary time attention at the University level to study Moral Ethic. This lack in the formation of future graduates means that they begin the professional life not only with limited professional knowledge, but with an almost total absence in many cases, of a solid Christian foundation. This task is being undertaken by the Catholic university organizations it has devoted special attention to the development and moral formation of the university students; it has made him understand his responsibility which he has as university student and future graduate before God, before his Country and before Society. His special vocation his call to a cultured life make the student and graduate a chosen individual whose moral formation must have a solid basis, whose profession must be his apostolate, his means of personal sacrifice.

This task which the Federation of Catholic Women undertake, has been helped by the incorporation into Catholic Action, the Movement of Intellectual and Graduate Catholic. This movement will help young graduate especially its women members to carry out her work in her own professional field in an atmosphere more suited to the fulfillment of her double mission as women as a graduate.

#### STATISTIC (Notice at Cuba exhibition)

According to the statistic we have received, we can include that the young woman graduate entering on her career, faces very diverse problems; moral and economic problems, problems of adaptation etc.

The proportion of young graduates who confront problems and -- their division into two categories is as follows:

Young women graduated with problems on beginning their career  
Young women graduate without problems on the beginning their career

Of the young women graduated who met difficulties, only 45 % - overcome them, either by personal effort, or with the help of organization etc.

a) - 26.4 % of these young women received help from specific organization (Catholic in the majority)

b) - 22.6 % overcome it by personal effort.

c) - According to statistic, help from family, friends, etc came third.

d)- The help given to the young women graduate by the university is infinitesimal, and only concerns itself with finding jobs or recommending its best students, as for example in the Faculty of Law where positions in Public Revenue or as Company Lawyers are distributed to the best students.

e)- The Professional Colleges, which should help the young -- women graduates only offer their service as far as we could make out, as trade unions, except in very exceptional cases

On analysing the problems which usually affect young women graduates, we find that economic problems with all their variants, are first.

Referring to moral problems it is an interesting fact that all or almost all the catholic graduate women interviewed, presented moral problems, thus showing the feeling of responsibility which the Catholic possesses in this respect. The percentage of moral problems among the young graduate non-catholic graduated women was much less. Catholic organizations have a big role to play respect to this problem. In Cuba, as we pointed in (a). the work done in this sphere, -is due exclusively to our Catholic University organizations.

Another most important problem if we analyse its repercussion on -- professional life was that vocation:

About 23 % of the women interviewed feel cheated by their -- choice of career; this is due not only to vocational disorientation but also to exterior conditions of work: small salary, too much -- work and little consideration etc.

The remainder, that is to say about 73.5 % are satisfied with About 4.5% were undecided. The rest did not answer

In the questions concurring the young women graduated and marriage we obtained the following data:

Most of the women who were asked if their profession was or -- would be an obstacle in marriage replied in the negative; and the remainder though that the difficulty of balancing both aspects of -- their lives without detriment to one or the other depended on frequency, time and effort which they had to dedicate to their pro-- fession.

To the question as to whether the married woman in normal circumstances should work or not, most of the graduates replied in the -- affirmative, provided home obligations were not abandoned in favour of work. As to whether the mother of a family should work or not, the replied were far more cautious, and we noticed that the most -- of those who replied in the negative, were Catholic. This indicates once more the feeling of responsibility which guides them.

In answer to the question whether the division activities between the home and their profession, had caused emotional conflicts the women interviewed fell into two almost equal groups:

44 % had met with difficulties.

In the remaining 56 % who had met with no problems, we must -- stress the following points: both, husband and wife were professional and in most cases, of the same profession; this factor helped marriage relationship.

#### CONCLUSIONS

- 1.- The woman graduated despite her personal value, is not socially accepted in all careers.
- 2.- Not all careers are suited for women and vice versa, since they harm her socially by the effect which the exercise of her profession may have on family life.
- 3.- Difficulties are minimized when women's natural and professional vocation match each other.
- 4.- Catholic University organization have a big role to play with regard to the young woman graduate. We recommended: study meetings, Canteen Groups, spiritual guidance etc.