

1 'It's high time men ceased to regard women as  
second-class citizens'

This is supposed to be an enlightened age, but you wouldn't think so if you could hear what the average man thinks of the average woman. Women won their independence years ago. After a long, bitter struggle, they now enjoy the same educational opportunities as men in most parts of the world. They have proved repeatedly that they are equal and often superior to men in almost every field. The hard-fought battle for recognition has been won, but it is by no means over. It is men, not women who still carry on the sex war because their attitude remains basically hostile. Even in the most progressive societies, women continue to be regarded as second-rate citizens. To hear some men talk, you'd think that women belonged to a different species!

On the surface, the comments made by men about women's abilities seem light-hearted. The same tired jokes about women drivers are repeated day in, day out. This apparent light-heartedness does not conceal the real contempt that men feel for women. However much men sneer at women, their claims to superiority are not borne out by statistics. Let's consider the matter of driving, for instance. We all know that women cause far fewer accidents than men. They are too conscientious and responsible to drive like maniacs. But this is a minor quibble. Women have succeeded in any job you care to name. As politicians, soldiers, doctors, factory-hands, university professors, farmers, company directors, lawyers, bus-conductors, scientists and presidents of countries they have often put men to shame. And we must remember that they frequently succeed brilliantly in all these fields in addition to bearing and rearing children.

Yet men go on maintaining the fiction that there are many jobs women can't do. Top-level political negotiation between countries, business and banking are almost entirely controlled by men, who jealously guard their so-called 'rights'. Even in otherwise enlightened places like Switzerland women haven't even been given the vote. This situation is preposterous! The arguments that men put forward to exclude women from these fields are all too familiar. Women, they say, are unreliable and irrational. They depend too little on cool reasoning and too much on intuition and instinct to arrive at decisions. They are not even capable of thinking clearly. Yet when women prove their abilities, men refuse to acknowledge them and give them their due. So much for a man's ability to think clearly!

The truth is that men cling to their supremacy because of their basic inferiority complex. They shun real competition. They know in their hearts that women are superior and they are afraid of being beaten at their own game. One of the most important tasks in the world is to achieve peace between the nations. You can be sure that if women were allowed to sit round the conference table, they would succeed brilliantly, as they always do, where men have failed for centuries. Some things are too important to be left to men I