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672

URANIA

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TWO-MONTHLY.

“Life that vibrates in every breathing form,
“Truth that looks out over the window sill,
“And Love that is calling us home out of the storm.”

—Gore-Booth, “*The Shepherd of Eternity*.”

EFFETE FEMINISTS

ANYONE would think that the names of Winifred Holtby, Ethel Smyth and Malvida Meysenbug constituted a triad of conspicuous representatives of Feminism. There is a fatal flaw in all the three, which makes their influence a useless, or rather an opposing one. For they all accepted sex. The eldest was once “engaged,” the others, according to their own account, were quite willing to be! In fact Dr. Smyth enlarges modestly on the topic of her admirers, and she puts her support of the suffrage cause flatly on the ground, not that “women” are human beings, but that they are entirely different from “men.” Winifred Holtby, whose death we all deplore, wrote* that the only thing that prevented her from being engaged and married to somebody is that “men are such rabbits.”

This is all to sell the pass—to cut the dykes—to open the floodgates—to blow up the foundations under our feet—to cut away the branch that we are sitting on—!

It is to reduce the suffrage from an inspiring symbol of equality to a mere materialistic engine of material progress. Winifred Holtby was, indeed, obsessed by an urge to improve material conditions. It got on her nerves. Intensely appreciating luxury, she could not enjoy it for the thought of human misery. Even when she realised that the poor are often very happy and cheerful, she fell back on the thorns of mental misery; and because some people are constitutionally miserable, she could not allow herself to be happy. Much in the same way, when the present writer was a child, she was impressed by the sad fate of the flies in the spiders’ webs; and devoted her entire leisure to releasing them—until a few evenings of that employment convinced her that she was made for something else: and that twenty or thirty flies restored to an ephemeral existence, out of several quadrillions who would remain the food of spiders, were not, regrettable as it might be, the appropriate

* *Letters to a Friend*.

aim of her activities. But Winifred Holtby remained haunted by the spectre of evil, and the suffrage appeared to her as a means of relief. In that capacity, it has proved itself a broken reed: the suffragists of the Holtby-Smyth type who worked for it in the hope that it would bring about an improvement of material conditions met only with disappointment. The parliamentary system is worm-eaten by Party politics; no juggling with the suffrage can improve matters.

But to us, the suffrage was invaluable as a symbol. Our aim was to cut at the root of all material evils by securing the obliteration of the masculine shortcomings—the roughness, the arrogance, the self-importance, the coarseness, the insensitive dullness, of “men.” And that is a difficult business. The first step towards it is necessarily to take no notice of sex: to behave as though it did not exist.† Of course, engagements and marriage are inconsistent with this high ignoring of sexual difference. So long as it is not ignored, the masculine defects will come rushing in: and may bring the conventional feminine defects along with them.

These three hard-working feminists, therefore, have missed the core and kernel of Feminism. They were not working for the release of the spirit from the bonds of sex limitation. They were only seeking to perfect a rotten social instrument.

So Winifred Holtby’s penetrating wit, Ethel Smyth’s gallant defiance of opposition and Malvida Meysenbug’s ardour of aspiration, have been paralyzed for good, because they failed to realise that the cause of Love demands the discarding of sex, and the worship of a single ideal of charm and strength of will.

I. KINLOCH.

† It may be useful to remark that this is a literary and not a mathematical phrase! One may talk of treating one’s rich and poor friends “exactly” alike: but this need not mean that one might not delicately give a treat to the latter. Again, one treats one’s tall and short friends alike, ignoring naturally the physical difference; yet one need not warn the short ones to “mind their heads”!

URANIA'S MEANING

THERE have been many occasions on which sensible and friendly persons have expressed themselves unable to understand our meaning, or to "see what we were driving at." We propose to explain in the simplest and plainest words what we intend.

It is clear to everybody that "boys" are brought up with one ideal, and "girls" with another. A girl's is much the more agreeable of the two, to herself and to others, but for the moment that is not the point. The character set before her and her brother is different. She is expected to be more or less refined, delicate and complaisant, while she need not mind evincing a considerable shrinking from publicity and physical pain. But he is expected to be a comparatively blunt, self-assertive and insensitive character. Little as either of them may correspond in actual fact to the picture, there is no doubt that, in the mass, and on the average, "men" and "women" do show the impress of these two contrasting and faulty norms.

What we say, *first*, is that the two images are faulty. We go further, and say that they are not equally faulty. But what we insist on is that the defects of either ought to be replaced by the attractive features of the other. A girl should not be encouraged to be a coward. A boy should not be encouraged to be a Philistine. So far, are we plain?

Most people stop here. They are not blind worshippers of Marinetti, Nietzsche and Strindberg. They will admit that an individual endowed alike with sweetness, intelligence and independence would be in the abstract an admirable being. But they are too conventional and indolent to act on that admission. Their chief argument is a wail that the thing is impossible. A "man" is a "man," and a "woman" a "woman," and it is impossible to make them anything else, and we need not try. No one who has any experience of the effects of environment will believe it. Humanity is so constituted that Love is its mainspring. It will, and it cannot but, respond to Love, whatever Mr. Marinetti may say. Whatever Mr. Nietzsche's lunatic prepossession for Odin, humanity will go on preferring Christ and Venus.

But those who agree that the union of all desirable qualities is not impossible, and who see the vast possibilities which education offers in this direction, are sometimes curiously distrustful of the results. If the factitious attraction between "men" and "women" were abolished, what would become of

marriage—and of the race? It is sufficient to reply that the continuance of the race is not dependent upon sexual attraction. If people want children, they can have children. And the intensity of love will not be diminished, but incalculably increased, by the fact that both lovers are aiming at the same ineffable Perfection.

We arrive at the position that the union of all good qualities in an ideal for every individual is possible and desirable. And we find that the great obstacle to this lies in the dual ideal grounded in sex. To eliminate the influence of a dwarfed ideal on the mind, it is imperative, therefore, to get rid of the consciousness of sex. The consciousness of sex brings with it, and cannot but bring with it, the insistent consciousness of the typical sexual ideal, with its typical defects, and fastens them upon the soul. So long as one thinks of oneself as a "man" or a "woman" one opens one's soul to the characteristic male or female defects.

Consequently one has to discard sex. And sex being so pervasive a thing—as *Eve's Sour Apples* says, it turns up even in one's handkerchiefs and umbrellas!—it has got to be utterly pushed aside in all its manifestations. It does not follow that this is to be done in a crudely childish way; there are occasions on which the line of maximum exclusion of the idea will reside in a limited admission of the fact. The consciousness of sex might be far more severely felt by a "woman" who suddenly went among all her acquaintances in coat and trousers than if she kept to her accustomed costume. But, within those obvious limits, if we want to liberate the spirit, the trammels of sex have got to be discarded. And they cannot be discarded if we voluntarily enter into relations based on sex.

Surely all this is not only intelligible, but logical!

There is a last argument which is urged by opponents. That is, that the whole basis of our reasoning is that the only consideration is the improvement of individuals. Whereas, the thing to be considered is not the individual, but the collectivity:—humanity or some such abstraction as is dear to the Communist mentality. And the advancement of the collectivity may require the stunting of the individual soul. To which we reply that the stunting of the individual being never can contribute to the welfare of the whole. The better each individual is, the whole cannot but be the better for it. This is entirely independent of all argument concerning Individualism, Socialism and Totalitarianism. Whatever our chosen system is, and however much it may require

the suppression of individual claims, it can never but be the better for the improvement of individual character.

Even the militarist must have some lingering admiration for a nation whose "women" are too proud and glorious to accept the limitations of womanhood!

I. C.

AGAIN SUGAR

As regards the comparative merits of the masculine and feminine ideals, we have never made any secret of our conviction that the latter is immeasurably superior. It is disfigured only by a certain tendency to a want of independent self-assurance, but it cannot be said that it displays a want of firmness. For the feminine ideal involves the utmost firmness in the refusal to do wrong, and in the protection of the beloved. To say that "women" are devoid of courage is to say that Love is cowardly.

As love and sweetness combined with independence are the key-note of the feminine ideal, the grim philosophies of the day are entirely unfavourable to our propaganda. Certainly they cannot last; because the heart loves beauty and freedom, and these will always be victorious over gloom and oppression. When we visited Rome in 1934, anti-Communist as we are, we were repelled to a degree by the harsh and blatant steel tubes and stiff rigidity of the architecture of the great Exhibition. But it only reflected one facet of all present-day Art. And the Art of the day reflects its temper of mind. From the spindly concrete façades of modern Stockholm and Helsinki to the chrome-steel insolence of modern New York and Belgravia, we get the same hard temper of disillusion and despair. Communism has no use for love. Fascism despises sweetness. Totalitarian Germany thrusts Love and Sweetness into the kitchen. Bureaucratic France and England become every day more like a governess and less like a sweetheart: their officialism is on the high road to Totalitarianism. What can be built, or taught, or sold in England without the mark of the Official Beast? Not much. In Scotland three years ago one could be fined for selling a quart of raspberries without a licence!

Now all this is utterly against the interests of the State. Starkness, and coercion, and bitterness can only lead to conflict, disunion and disintegration. The eagle will not breed in captivity; and yet people complain of the falling birth-rate. How can it be expected that a nation harried by inspectors and

"managed" by Boards will go on producing a progeny to be the slaves of officials? A slave population might continue on those sad terms—but a race which has some lingering memory of freedom cannot. The Stark State is faced with the ultimate prospect of a dwindling and disunited population, trained in unfriendly grimness and doomed to decay. It may flourish for a time exceedingly; the Spartan harshness may trample down Athens,—the Roman legionary, subjected to a brutal discipline, may march over Europe—the Red Indian may range over a palpitating America. But where is the Empire? Where is Sparta? Where is the American Indian? Gone: and only the affection of Horace and Virgil, the devotion of Leonidas and the sententious wisdom of the Red man, left surviving. Lesbia's sparrow lives longer than the legions.

So that if a State wishes to survive, it must really wash its hands of grimness and male "strength." The greatest strength lies in the free union of love: a state which relies on force and harshness is digging its own pit, and in good time it will go down into that tomb.

As we remarked last year, it is better to go forward into the menacing future with sugar rather than sulphur in one's heart. Yet all the world is calling for sulphur—and G. K. Chesterton, literally with his last breath, vindicates Christianity from the charge of Sweetness! In "*The Thing*," G. K. C. urges anxiously that when the Catholic Church says "*Dulcis*," it does not mean "*sweet*"—no such thing; it means something like "gracious and helpful"! So that Faber was all wrong when he wrote about "the Sweet Will of God"—and when the Psalmist wrote of the Word being sweeter than the honeycomb, he really meant "more gracious and helpful than the honeycomb"!

There seem to be no limits to the ridiculous.

IRENE CLYDE.

BREAKING A BUTTERFLY

It is extremely funny to notice how writers, in expressing anti-feminist ideas, dispense themselves entirely from sense and logic. The late Canon Madeane's chapter on the Home, in *Equality and Fraternity*, is composed principally of quotation and secondarily of bare assertion. He quotes on page 253 a passage of C. Patmore's,—"*Man, in the order of being is, and will be for ever above her,*" and on page 254, the same infallible Patmore's—"*She raised me to her noble place*"! Poets are not

expected to be rational—but even a poetaster ought not to raise a person to the place of one who is below him! He quotes from Bishop Gore—"To maintain that men and women are only physiologically different is to run one's head against the brick wall of fact and science." It is to run it against something very different—episcopal pontification!

And the absurd man postulates that "it must be granted that all love . . . is necessarily between unequals." "*Love is either worship or pity*"—about the most monumentally foolish dictum ever committed to cold print. He thinks he has demolished the idea of equality when he remarks that if a "man" behaved to "women" exactly as he would to other "men," they would call him a brute:—and he does not see that this is not because equality is undesirable, but because men's manners are rather brutal. But we will not go on with breaking this butterfly on the wheel of rational discussion!

"IGNORE THE DIFFERENCE"

WE are favoured with a note from the eminent philosopher, Lutoslawski, for which we are grateful. He states it as his opinion that the most intense expression of sex tends directly to the assimilation of the characters of the participants:—a proposition in which we cannot follow him. Like many other correspondents, Professor Lutoslawski ascribes a mathematical content to our motto—"Ignore Sex!"—which it by no means implies. What we mean by it is to act and think as if the difference did not exist: and we think it would only be misleading, if we entered on a laboured explanation of the limits which the maxim may have. For instance, a surgeon called in to treat an accident or a pathological condition in the lumbar region is not called upon to apply the maxim literally. So much, we think, ought to be patent to anybody.

Professor Lutoslawski asks, why not recognise the difference and endeavour to eliminate it? We must here distinguish between the physical difference and the mental and moral difference. Our position is that the latter is factitious, and essentially the only thing worth trying to modify. In order to modify it, the physical difference must be ignored to the utmost practical limit. Otherwise individuals will be faced at every turn with a force impressing the conventional masculine or female character upon them. It is to release them from this pressure that we *must* "ignore" their sex.

How, then, asks the Professor, can you report and

enjoy cases of change of sex? For the very reason that these do not tend to impress the individual character with the stamp of sex,—but on the contrary tend to liberate it. Our formula is for practical use, not for mathematical applications.

I. C.

REVUE AS AN ESCAPE!

OR all people, I am conclusively certain, our girls cut the most pathetic figure. With their hearts crying out for freedom, they find all around them high pressure being brought to bear in order to keep them down on the rack of old traditions. By temperament they are against the crumbling scheme of life lived or being lived by their forebears. In truth, it would be no overstatement to say that the Japanese girl has drunk more deeply in the gushing spring of radicalism than her brothers. She is so absurdly and insistently isolated from the companionship of boys. Parents, visiting relatives, brothers and her whole neighbourhood join hands in pinning her down to the cut-and-dried pattern of the rapidly-fading Miss Nippon with whom she has next to nothing in common. She wants to see herself in top hat and tails, twirling a cane, turning somersaults and singing airy ditties to her heart's content. Such a wonderful escapade she can have vicariously at the Shochiku revue. *Voilà!*

(From *The Japanese At Home*,
by IPPEI FUKUDA.)

SCRAPS

"MY belief in a Special Providence grows yearly stronger,—unsubduable, impregnable."—(*Carlyle to Emerson*, 13th May, 1835.)

"IMMORTALITY also till of late years I never could so much as see the possibility of; till now in some sense the certainty and philosophic necessity of it became manifest. And so I live in a kind of Christian Islam . . . and say at all times of Fortune, 'God is great' and also 'God is good' . . ."—(*Carlyle to Mill*, 20th January, 1834.)

"You say . . . that Teufelsdröckh does not believe in a 'personal God' . . . A grave charge, an *awful* charge: to which, if I mistake not, the Professor, laying his hand on his heart, will reply with some gesture expressing the solemnest *denial*. In gesture rather than in speech; for 'the Highest cannot be

spoken of in words.' 'Personal,' 'Impersonal,' One, Three, *what* meaning can any mortal (after all) attach to them in reference to such an object? *Wer darf ihn nennen?* I dare not, and do not."—(*Carlyle to Sterling*, 4th June, 1835.)

"THE problem of the twentieth century is not to create a literate electorate, but to find an educated government. To imagine that you can survive the one without ensuring the other is a pitiable fantasy. Every one of the 'ideas' about which our literate electorate is vocal, not to say strident, is taken from the lips of the politicians, and if the ideas have the seeds of disruption in them, the very fertility of the soil on which they fall will work ruin more rapidly than in any other age. Only in an age of public and compulsory education could Europe have passed from the high hopes of 1918 to the envy and malice and despair of to-day in so short a space of time. . ."

"PROFESSIONAL 'thinkers' have unfortunately shown themselves equally incapable in all parts of Europe of understanding anything of the chief problem of to-day, the restriction of the growth of the positive state. The result has been, in England as elsewhere, a major revolution, which will inevitably in time divide us far more distinctively from the England of our fathers, than from the tyrannies of Italy, Russia, Germany, Turkey or Eastern Spain . . ."

"DYSENTERIC, enteric and typhoid (the last two politely termed enteritis and paratyphoid—out of loyalty to the virtue of inoculation) . . ."—(*Douglas Jerrold*, "Georgian Adventure," pp. 68, 144.)

"MORE and more am I convinced that it is in the education of children, not in the councils of statesmen, however wisely they may work, that the future is to be made for good or evil."—(*Winifred Holtby*, *Letters to a Friend*, 1st October, 1929.)

"IF God is Love, then Love is God."—(*Ibid.*)

"HAVE you ever thought about being a vegetarian? Every time I think about the disgusting habit of eating cows and sheep and rabbits, I am one When quite on my own, I usually live on oatcake, fruit and milk."—(*Ibid.*, 13th October, 1929.)

"WE must hold beauty fast. She is the most certain solace for so many human sorrows."—(*Ibid.*, Prize Address at Pretoria, 19th March, 1936.)

NOTICE

Some time ago we received an appreciated note from a friend inviting us to send copies of this paper to "MISS ROWTCLIFF," and giving an address at Victoria Court. The last copy has been returned, the addressee having "MOVED AWAY."

Can our friend kindly give us a more recent address?

ED., URANIA.

URANIA

TWO FRIENDS.

WE regret extremely to have to chronicle the loss of two friends who had the principles of URANIA very closely at heart. ESTHER ROPER, to our great satisfaction, from the very first allowed the use of her name in our statement of objects, and her warm approval, together with that of her never-forgotten Friend, Eva Gore-Booth, was a tower of strength to us. Their work in all humane causes, political and social, was incessant and untiring. It has been too little brought before the public—for the record of their fragrant lives could not but be stimulating to our jaded time.

She passed away in sleep, after a long period of delicate health, but little acute illness—an enviable end. Extremely averse from all violence, she once declared in our hearing that she “would not shoot a pursuing tiger!” Such uncompromising *ahimsa* is surely the root of all real progress.

ARTHUR ST. JOHN resigned his Captaincy in the Inniskilling Fusiliers for similar uncompromising reasons. He had unlimited tenacity and courage, and a wonderfully acute intellect. His *magnum opus*, *Dream*, is shortly to appear in print. All our readers will wish to possess it, and we trust it will have the widest possible circulation. Arthur St. John combined with wisdom and courage an inexhaustible and tolerant tenderness which made his companionship an inspiration. To the lady who was his life-consort, with a charm perfectly fitted to his own, we offer our deepest sympathy, as we do to the well-loved Brother of Esther Roper. We can heartily use of these departed two the words of the Christian Scripture:—“Of whom the world was not worthy.”

URANIA

EVE'S SOUR APPLES

BY

IRENE CLYDE

(Author of *Beatrice the Sixteenth*, etc.)

No reader of URANIA can fail to be interested in this book, in which the Author develops her ideas on the hindrance which sex constitutes to the attainment of ideal character. Why should some be condemned to be rather coarse and others to be rather trivial?

There is no answer. Except for hidebound convention, there is no reason why they should. So the Author passionately calls for an abandonment of all recognition of sex—and for liberty to all to combine Sweetness and Independence.

She does not shirk any of the problems raised by sex. The side-issues of clothes and the lash are duly examined. But there is nothing to offend the most fastidious Victorian.

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URANIA

TO OUR FRIENDS

URANIA denotes the company of those who are firmly determined to ignore the dual organization of humanity in all its manifestations.

They are convinced that this duality has resulted in the formation of two warped and imperfect types. They are further convinced that in order to get rid of this state of things no measures of "emancipation" or "equality" will suffice, which do not begin by a complete refusal to recognize or tolerate the duality itself.

If the world is to see sweetness and independence combined in the same individual, *all* recognition of that duality must be given up. For it inevitably brings in its train the suggestion of the conventional distortions of character which are based on it.

There are no "men" or "women" in Urania.

"All' eisin hōs angeloī."

A register is kept of those who hold these principles, and all who are entered in it will receive this leaflet while funds admit. Names should be sent to J. Wade, 120, Abbey Road Mansions, London; D. H. Cornish, 13, Heene Terrace, Worthing, Sussex; T. Baty, 3, Paper Buildings, Temple, London, E.C.

Will those who are already readers and who would like us to continue sending them copies, kindly do us the favour of sending a post-card to one of the above addresses? We should much appreciate suggestions and criticisms.

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