

# URANIA.

GENERAL INDEX, 1930 [Nos. 79-84].

A Priori fallacies.	LXXIX, 3	League of Nations.	LXXXI, 3
Art, Erotic.	LXXXIII, 11	Literature, Types in Japanese.	LXXXI, 5
Athletics.	LXXXIII, 13	Liu-man-tshin's Diplomatic Journey.	LXXXI, 11
Aviators.	LXXXIII, 5	Lodge, Sir O.	LXXIX, 4
Bachelors, High Percentage of, in Ireland.	LXXIX, 2	Love and Eroticism.	LXXX, 1
Bayard, F. F.	LXXXI, 1	Mama no Takona.	LXXXIII, 9
Bell, Dr...	LXXIX, 6	Marriage, Tabooed in Suntak.	LXXIX, 1
"Biological Destiny."	LXXIX, 3	Marriage, what difference does it make?	LXXXI, 2
"Brigge, <i>Les Chiers de matie Lauride</i> ,"	LXXXI, 2	Marriage, Decline in France of.	LXXXI, 2
China (suntak), Marriage Tabooed in.	LXXIX, 1	Marriage, Dullness caused by.	LXXXIII, 2
China, Diplomatic Journey of Liu-man-tshin.	LXXXI, 11	Materialism.	LXXIX, 2
China, Diplomatic Journey of soumay-tsheng	LXXXIII, 12	Mathematics and Women.	LXXXIII, 13
Conventionalism, no Longer the Enemy.	LXXIX, 2	Mayreder, Rose.	LXXIX, 2
Conventionalism, disregarded by Dr. Bell.	LXXIX, 6	Open Door International.	LXXXI, 3
Cubism.	LXXXIII, 11	Penal Discipline.	LXXXIII, 15
Determinism, Pseudo-scientific.	LXXIX, 2	Philistines, March against the scientific.	LXXIX, 4
Diplomacy of Liu-man-tshin.	LXXXI, 11	Poetry—	
Disarmament, Wellington on.	LXXIX, 6	<i>Come, Leave the Level Road</i> (A. Milne).	LXXIX, 2
Disobedience, the Duty of, Prof Laski on.	LXXXIII, 11	Princesse à Deux âmes, La.	LXXXIII, 7
Dress, change of.	LXXXI, 2, LXXXIII, 15	Progress in 1929.	LXXXI, 5
Erotic Art.	LXXXIII, 11	Queen Charlotte of Tonga.	LXXXI, 3
Eroticism, Love and.	LXXXI, 1	Reventlow, Countzu, on Religion.	LXXIX, 4
Eternal State, the.	LXXIX, 4	Rilke.	LXXXI, 2
Exeter Cathedral.	LXXIX, 6	Riokan.	LXXIX, 5
Foster, M. and King's Prize.	LXXXI, 4	Sage of Dairen, the.	LXXXIII, 12
France, Suffragism in.	LXXXIII, 9	Sandes, Captain Flora.	LXXIX, 6
France, Marriage Decline in.	LXXXI, 2	Seafaring.	LXXXIII, 15
Freedom and Licentiousness.	LXXXI, 11	Sappho.	LXXXI, 11
Freedom Prof. Laski on.	LXXXIII, 10	Side-Saddles.	LXXIX, 6
Freedom, <i>Osaka Herald</i> on.	LXXXIII, 14	Spinsters.	LXXIX, 6
Fry, Sarah Allen.	LXXIX, 6	Spirit and Body.	LXXIX, 2
Hart, Dr. (Bryn Mawr) on Licentiousness and Freedom.	LXXXI, 11	Sport, Japanese Women in.	LXXXI, 7
Indecency.	LXXXI, 1	Suffragists.	LXXXIII, 1
Independence, Women's sense of.	LXXXIII, 5	Suffragists in France.	LXXXIII, 9
Individualism, F. F. Bayard on.	LXXXI, 1	Suntak, Marriage, Tabooed in.	LXXIX, 1
Individualism (see <i>Open Door International</i> )		Synthetic Religion, A.	LXXIX, 4
Individuality, Prof. C. G. Shaw on.	LXXXIII, 4	Tonga, Queen Charlotte of.	LXXXI, 3
Ireland, High Percentage of Bachelors in.	LXXIX, 2	Tsheng, Soumay.	LXXXIII, 12
Japan (and see Mama no Takona)		Vaertings, The.	LXXXI, 1
School-girls' opinion on Politicians.	LXXIX, 6	Victoria, Princess.	LXXIX, 6
Types in Literature.	LXXXI, 5	Votes, I. A. R. Wylie on Women and.	LXXXIII, 1
Women of, in sport.	LXXXI, 7	"Well of Loneliness" The.	LXXIX, 2
"Santero" on Women of.	LXXXI, 9	West V. Sackville.	LXXXI, 2
Osaka Sun, on Women of.	LXXXIII, 14	Woman, Ascendant.	LXXIII, 15
King's Prize, the, won by M. Foster.	LXXXI, 4	Women's side of Life, Edith Shackleton on.	LXXXIII, 3
Lasciviousness, Dr. Hart on Freedom and.	LXXXI, 11	Women's side of Life, Prof. C. G. Shaw on.	LXXXIII, 4
Lasciviousness Marriage and.	LXXXI, 1	Women and Mathematics.	LXXXIII, 13
Laski, Prof. on the Duty of Disobedience.	LXXXIII, 10	Wylie, I. A. R. on "Women and Votes".	LXXXIII, 1

## STAR-DUST INDEX, 1930 [Nos. 79-84].

<p style="text-align: center;">I. MILITARY</p> <p>Bandits (China). LXXXI, 12; LXXXIII, 16</p> <p>Army (America): Muriel Cavendish. LXXXI, 12</p> <p style="text-align: center;">II. BUSINESS</p> <p>Harbour-Master (England). LXXIX, 7</p> <p style="text-align: center;">III. ATHLETICS</p> <p>Swimming (Scotland) LXXIX, 7</p> <p>Swimming (Hellasport). LXXXI, 12</p> <p>Racing (England). LXXIX, 7</p> <p>Motoring (England). LXXXI 12; LXXXIII, 16</p> <p>Capture (Australia). LXXXIII, 16</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IV. ACADEMIC</p> <p>Electricity (England). LXXIX, 7</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">VI. PSYCHOLOGY</p> <p>Audience (England). LXXXI, 13</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VII. DRESS</p> <p>Dr Mayfield (America). LXXIX, 7</p> <p>Shiyoko Iida (Japan). LXXXI, 13</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VIII. LAW</p> <p>Judge (Sweden). LXXIX, 7</p> <p>Bar (India): <i>Ponkshe</i>. LXXXI, 13</p> <p style="text-align: center;">X. MUSIC</p> <p>Orchestra (America). LXXXIII, 16</p> <p style="text-align: center;">XII. PHYSIOLOGY</p> <p>Lord Londesborough (England). LXXIX, 7</p> <p style="text-align: center;">XIII. MEDICINE</p> <p>Surgeon (Rajputana): <i>Gahlot</i>. LXXXI, 13</p>
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# URANIA

Nos. 79 & 80.

JANUARY—APRIL, 1930.

TWO-MONTHLY.

**"Let us break their bonds in sunder, and cast their cords away from us."—Psalms.**

## **Please Write!**

We would again venture very warmly and cordially to urge those who respond to the ideal of freedom advocated by this little paper to do us the favour of intimating their concurrence with us. Votes are to be had for the asking—seats in legislatures are open—but there is a vista before us of a spiritual progress which far transcends all political matters. It is the abolition of the "manly" and the "womanly."

**Will you not help to sweep them into the museum of antiques?**

**Don't you care for the union of all fine qualities in one splendid ideal? If you think it magnificent but impracticable, please write to tell us so, and say why!**

## MARRIAGE IS TABOO

CHINA has been more than once alluded to as "Topsy-turvy Land"; but one little country of that vast Republic lying not many miles distant from the city of Canton is, to the Chinese mind, the world upside down. Its womenfolk look upon marriage as a hideous custom. Vast numbers refuse flatly to live with their husbands after marrying. Hundreds upon hundreds of maidens chose female friends for "spouses"; and may live with these "life companions" until death breaks up the relationship.

A peculiar economic condition has given rise to this notion that to go through life tied down to a home and family is all wrong. For these are the women of the county of Santak, the great mulberry-producing belt of the Kwangtung Province, where most of the silk filatures of the southland are to be found. Unreeling silk from the cocoon is essentially a woman's job; and the Santak women have a monopoly of the industry. They make good money, and hence need not be dependent upon a soul for their support. In fact, most of them not only earn a wage that enables them to live well themselves, but makes it possible for them to be the main support of their parents. Why should they bow to the overlordship of a mother-in-law as, under Chinese custom, a married woman must, they argue? Why should they assume the great res-

ponsibilities of motherhood? Why should one forfeit her independence, give up a "career", be a drudge for a mere man, adding to his happiness, while she herself must pine away, and live a life of sorrow and misery? An average wage of 80 cents a day has decided the issue against the marriage relationship.

This state of mind has given rise to the practice of women finding each, another of her sex similarly-minded, and entering into compacts whereby they pair off, living with the chosen ones as life companions. The majority, driven to it by their parents, do go through a marriage ceremony; but it often happens that a wife passes through life from marriage to the grave without having stepped inside the door of her husband's home except on the wedding day. Some, out of their earnings, make settlements on the spouse, so that he can afford to acquire a concubine; if the man concerned has plenty of money of his own, he will not expect such an arrangement to be made.

Throughout Santak are clubhouses, or apartment-houses, in which live a number of these mated female couples. But often they build their own separate abode.

In China, the son is the apple of his father's eye, and of his mother's eye too, for that matter. In Santak, it is the other way around: daughters,



if anything, are preferred to sons. And in no part of China are so many "mui tsai", or girl attendants, purchased as in this prosperous region. About the first of this year, by mandate, the provincial government attempted to wipe out the life companionship system. Other trials have been made of changing age-old customs too, but they have been no more successful than has been the attempt to alter the way of living which these country people have seen fit to adopt. Until the Sun-tak women change their way of thinking, they will openly, or, if driven to it, in secret, carry on the same practice, law or no law, mandate or no mandate. They will not give up 80 cents a day for any individual of the opposite sex, no matter what you may say or do.

—*Japan Times*, 27 Oct. 1929.

#### COME, LEAVE THE LEVEL ROAD.

"So much below the highest,  
So far off from the best"—  
Think they who are the highest  
In their aspiring quest.  
Yet they, by tireless effort,  
Are slowly climbing heights  
And lighting flaming beacons  
That pierce the darkest nights.

O come, and cheer their scrow,  
O come, and share their load—  
To bring a better morrow  
Come, leave the level road.

A Milne (Glasgow)

#### IRELAND LEADS THE WORLD.

THE Irish Free State has a higher percentage of unmarried men than any other country, according to figures recently issued by John Hooper, Director of Statistics.

Eighty per cent of the young men in the Free State, between the ages of 25 and 30 are bachelors, and the figures further reveal that one man in every four never takes unto himself a wife. In a comparison with the figures of twenty-two other countries, it is shown that the Irish Free State has easily the largest percentage of bachelors, while the United States is clear at the bottom of the list with the lowest number of unmarried males of any coun-

try. It has often been asserted that the Free State was the happy hunting ground of the bachelor and Hooper's figures prove this beyond all doubt.

In the case of unmarried women too, the Irish Free State and the United States occupy first and last positions respectively, indicating that the United States, with the exception of India and China, can boast a larger percentage of youthful marriages than any other country. Irish women, it seems, marry late in life. Sixty-two per cent of the women between the ages of 25 and 30 are leading spinster lives; of those between 30 and 35, forty-two per cent are single; between 35 and 40, thirty-two per cent and between 55 and 65, twenty-four per cent.

The figures further show that the percentage of males clinging to bachelorhood are much higher in the country districts than in the towns.

—*Japan Advertiser*, 26 April, 1930.

#### THE SLIMY ENEMY

When, fifty years ago, we first articulately formulated our reasons for abominating sex-distinctions—even when, fifteen years ago, we first projected this little leaflet—the only opposition which it occurred to us to expect lay in the dead weight of tradition and convention. It appeared so rational that every person should be encouraged to aspire to all excellence, that it seemed only the blindness of convention that could refuse to open the way of Beauty to men and of Independence to women. Giant Dulness was a sufficiently formidable enemy. But we thought we could venture safely to attack His Toothless Majesty.

However, in the last five or ten years, it has become apparent that the serious conflict is not with tradition and blind adherence to convention. A far more subtle and serious enemy has to be overcome. And that is pseudo-scientific Determinism—in other words, Materialism. The spirit is conceived of as a function of the body, and its character and energies as determined by the nature of the bodily frame. A girl, therefore, need never think of displaying the mental activity and vigour of man; for her physical frame is delicate and her part in the critical function a passive one. Similarly, a youth need never hope to emulate the sweetness and delicacy of women. Stated crudely, it is a sufficiently silly

idea. One might as well say that tall people are noble-minded, muscular people clever, stout people heavy and dull: yet we know that physical traits are no guide whatever to mental endowments. Rosa Mayreder however puts the case almost as crudely as this. "Her predestination to maternity...[involves] a peculiar weakness of will and a susceptibility to suggestion which subject her to the influence of the masculine will." (see *Survey*, pp. 38, 39).

Although an 'advanced' feminist, she falls like any old early-Victorian dame into the hoary fallacy of supposing that girls naturally are inclined by some inexplicable alchemy to admire boys and *vice versa*. It is for that reason, she complacently tells us, that she herself thinks the masculine ideal superior: "I would give the preference to the male sex, but that seems to be a prejudice naturally inherent in the female". Very obviously, it is for no such unintelligible biological reason, but because she herself has a masculine mind, hard, pugnacious and pontifical. "The cow thinks the ideal being is a cow, a woman, a woman: and a man, a man". So does a masculine woman. In much the same way Radclyffe Hall in the *Well of Loneliness* paints her heroine as devoted to the masculine ideal of sport and hardness. That is not because she has a particularly feminine mind, but because she has a particularly masculine one.

Another aspect of the same pseudo-scientific Determinism is seen in the *furor* with which the emancipated modern girl interpretes her freedom as freedom to enslave herself to men. It might almost be inferred that Freedom meant nothing else. The acceptance of her biological destiny takes precedence of the fulfilment of her soul—to her utter degradation.

The ideal woman of forty years ago was an ethereal creature, who disdained to be bound by the limitation of her body, although she might, through tradition, through vanity or through poverty, be brought into the possession of a lover. She was not a biological machine wallowing before every passable man. The 'frankness' and 'realism' and "candour" of the present day spell, not freedom, but Enslavement, the Enslavement of the Spirit to a purgatory of physiology.

Just as good taste ignores spots and pimples on a friend's face, so a healthy mind will shake itself

free of physical prepossessions such as these and, impatiently and inexorably, will brush them aside in its passionate urge towards perfection. The compelling visions of the soul are no less "natural", no less "evolutionary", no less "scientific", no less "cosmic", than the passionate urges of the body.

In point of fact, the soul knows extremely little about the body. She has to gain her knowledge by laborious investigations which she would never have to make, if she were the slavish reflex of the body, attuned to its every fibre. She is an entire stranger to its complicated structure and movements; its limbs seem to be a complete surprise in fait to the infant, and very imperfectly under its control. Not only that: besides knowing next to nothing about the body, there is a fact about what she does know that the soul exceedingly dislikes. Blood, bones and raw flesh has a most unpleasant scent: the secretions of the body are uniformly detestable not only to the fastidious, but to every normal human being. How can all these plain facts be reconciled with the modish doctrine that the soul's activities should be governed by the nature and destiny of the body? It is precisely the modern form of the scholasticism of the Middle Ages, which persisted in deriving everything from a preconceived, *a priori*, notion of what it ought to be, instead of patiently observing what it is. There is a preconceived scheme of things, religious in the one case, biological in the other, into which the facts have got to be squeezed. In neither case is the process philosophical or sensible.

But the physiological evangel is loudly preached, and the duty of faithful obedience to the laws of bodily existence bids fair to eclipse all the instincts of the spirit. It would be of no use our proclaiming the need that the external circumstance of dress and manners shall no longer impede the soul in its union with Beauty and Valiancy, to a world which had made up its mind that no such union is possible or desirable. A world which sees the soul hopelessly imprisoned in the body, itself a pale reflection of its prison, will rate Beauty and Valiancy cheap, compared with Biology. Our effort in the future must be not, I as in 1900, to awaken a dull world to the obstacles which the conventions based on sex offer to the attainment of the soul's perfection, but to awaken a still duller



and deader world to the fact that Beauty and Valiancy of heart are things greater and grander than bodily growth and reproduction and decay.

It is a march against the Philistines, and it knows no possibility of failure.

#### SYNTHETIC RELIGION

A NEW "German religion," consisting of the old, pre-Christian, Germanic ideas about life and death combined with the doctrines of Christ, under strict exclusion of all Jewish elements of the old Testament, is proposed by Count Ernst zu Reventlow, (famous during the war as Germany's most quoted military writer.)

Count zu Reventlow explains his ideas in a book just published and entitled "For Christians, Non-Christians, Anti-Christians; or, The God Question of the Germans."

Because of the disillusion of war and defeat, also, as Count zu Reventlow himself points out, because all warring nations prayed to the same God for victory during the war, there is both a lot of religious disaffection in Germany as well as religious fermentation. The latter finds expression in movements which range from the adoration of the stigmatisation miracle of Therese von Konnerseuth to the semi-pagan naturalism of the "German Youth" movement. Count zu Reventlow's book is an attempt to reach a synthesis of these various movements.

His fight is directed particularly against modern materialism, against the predominance of rationalism, and against Judaism. The churches, he says, have failed and are losing themselves in mere formalism. As a result, he claims, the Germans have twice lost their religion, first their own original religion when Christianity was forced upon the Germanic tribes by the sword, and now the Christian religion through the collapse of the churches. Every nation or race, he believes, must have its own religion that must be born of its own innate religious aspirations and convictions. But he rejects the theory of a "chosen people", whether these people be Jews or Germans, and ridicules the pretensions of some Germans that "am deutschen Wesen soll die Welt genesen," meaning that the world must be regenerated by the adoption of German ways.

The foundation of the new religion, Count zu Reventlow says, must be the 'old Aryan, Germanic, German idea of the unreality of the world of appearances; and the guilt, the responsibility and the freedom of the individual.' Christ, he says, preached the same fundamental ideas and therefore he should become the center of the new religion. Count zu Reventlow does not propound finished doctrines and set formulas. He merely urges the Germans to search their own souls, to reject what is foreign and above all "to know themselves." As foreign he rejects both "the Jewish God Jahwe" and the doctrine of redemption. The first, he says, is merely a tribal God, and the latter is an adaptation of oriental ideas to load one's own guilt on the shoulders of another and make him suffer for it. The old German tribes, he says, also suffered under the consciousness of guilt, which was part of the evil of this world, but they accepted personal responsibility for their guilt and fought against the evil to their death, after which they became eligible to fight side by side with the half-gods in the final struggle between good and evil.

Christ's doctrines, Reventlow maintains, are entirely contrary to the Jewish doctrine; therefore, he says, though he will not claim that Christ was an Aryan, he certainly was not a Jew. Count zu Reventlow also explains that Wotan and the other Germanic gods were merely half-gods and that the real god of the Germanic tribes was something far above them, the "eternally unnamed."

*Japan Times, 10 September 1923.*

#### THE ETERNAL STATE

MANKIND is living in a state of eternity, is the belief of Sir Oliver Lodge. Addressing a group of advance scholars at Westfield College, Hampstead, he said, referring to the future of man:

"You cannot imagine a time before which there was nothing, and I cannot imagine a time after which there will be nothing. I think we are literally living in eternity.

"When I was young, I used to wonder at people attending to art, literature and music—all things which seemed to be imagination—and not attending to the realities studied by scientific men. Humanity seemed to be spending itself on the superficial and neglecting the real. But I got over it. I now

perceive that what I then called the real—that reality does not lie there. The ultimate realities are not given us by the senses nor by our instruments, nor weighed and measured in our laboratories. Reality lies behind, in the unseen, in the imagination. And that which occupies the attention of the poet and the artist and that which is apprehended by the plain man is more real than those things which we study".

#### RYOKAN.

By Y. ONISHI.

WHENEVER spring with its blossoms and birds comes, my heart turns to Ryokan, the recluse, priest and poet, who I believe felt the lure of spring more deeply than any other Japanese poet. I see in my mind's eye, that lean, aged priest-poet, of a warm spring afternoon, playing hide-and-seek and other innocent games with a group of peasants' children near his mountain cottage in Echigo, his native province, himself as sprightly as his juvenile friends, although he was nearing his seventieth year.

Or, I picture him in the company of a bunch of small country girls, playing with balls at the entrance of his cottage, all as merry as the twittering birds on the trees, singing songs that he had composed for them.

Ryokan, who lived about 100 years ago, was one of those happy few who can forget themselves in the contemplation of nature. He was so intoxicated with the beauty of nature that he lost all sense of his position as a man. Naturally he was an enigma to the simple-minded peasants around him who concluded that he was a madman, although they conceded he was the kindest man on earth.

A mendicant by profession, Ryokan went a-begging when his stocks of rice ran short. But he asked only enough rice to support him for a day. It infrequently happened that he spent a whole afternoon, playing with children he met on the road, utterly forgetful of his business, and when evening came, returned to his cottage, to find his ricebox empty.

From time to time he received a gift of money, but he saw no use for it, and stored it away until all was forgotten about it.

Once he was given several copper coins by a friend interested in him. On his way home he was

seen dropping those coins on the ground and picking them up one by one as though they were pieces of jewelry, and he went through the process repeatedly, shaking his head each time he picked them up. Seeing this, a peasant working on a farm nearby, went up to him and asked what he was doing. Aroused as from a reverie Ryokan stared at the peasant, showed him the coins in his hand, and said. "You see, I have several coins here. A friend gave them to me. This is the first time I have got so much money. Now, I have heard people talk of the joy of finding money on the street. I have been trying to experience something like that by picking up what I dropped on the ground, but all to no purpose. I realized that money found on the street does not give me joy any more than money I have."

Nature was to Ryokan what a mother is to her child. Everything in nature was lovely to him. He took an infinite interest in children. He loved them more than adults, whom he mistrusted. He liked girls better than boys, because he thought the girls embodied all that is good in nature.

Although a great admirer of women or of the qualities possessed by women, Ryokan was denied the opportunity of experiencing what he termed the heavenly nature of women until he was far advanced in age. A seeker of truth, a woman, who later became a nun and assumed the name of Teishin, called on Ryokan at his mountain cottage one day and asked about Buddhism. Ryokan told her how all was chaos so long as there was no faith in the Buddha. "Men grow and decay like the trees, but faith in the Buddha alone would make them eternal," said Ryokan. The woman, impressed by Ryokan's remarks cut off her hair and became a nun. This pleased Ryokan so much that he made her his first female disciple.

She was less than 30 years of age. Some time after, when Ryokan visited Teishin, he was in failing health and he saw his end was near. Teishin helped her aged teacher to enter, and she did all to entertain him. She proposed to play with balls, to go out in the fields, or to stay indoors and compose poems together. Each proposal was so pleasing to him that he was at a loss to make a choice.

Like the son of the nature that he was, Ryokan died in a mountain hut, remote from civilization, watched by Teishin and two other disciples, after a



short illness during which he saw visions of the best things in nature.

—*Japan Times.*

## VARIA

"When a very small child I used to pray every night that I might wake up in the morning and find myself a boy.....Many years afterwards, when I had long realised that if you had the misfortune to be born a woman, it is better to make the best of a bad job.....I was suddenly pitchforked into the Servian army, and for seven years lived practically a man's life.....I seem to have just naturally drifted, by successive stages, from a nurse into a soldier". (P. 9)

'14 Oct. 1916. I've changed my mind about 'sport', and loathe war and everything to do with it with all my heart, (but if I write particulars, the Censor would not pass it.)" P. 29.

"Princess Victoria came in then"—at a visit to Queen Alexandra—and said she wished she could wear these sorts of clothes [soldier's uniform] and asked if I carried a revolver". P. 121.

—*Captain Sande's Autobiography.*

Colonel McTaggart, who is considered one of the foremost authorities of the day on horsemanship, says:—"There is only one place for a side-saddle and that is in a museum." Such prominent equestriennes as Mrs. M. Ellis and Mrs. Gordon Foster are equally strong protagonists for the new mode—so called, though it's really as old for ladies as the days when they rode out with much state and pageant on their hawking expeditions.

The world has no more precious possession than in its spinsters —(*Mr. R. B. Kerr.*)

THE AUTHORITIES of Exeter Cathedral, the construction of which was started in 1112, have decided to do away with the custom whereby women whose heads are uncovered are excluded from places of worship.

The biographer of Sir Edward Fry has this note on a certain Dr. Gawen Bell—"This friend was an elderly M. D. living with Sarah Allen Fry (the writer's aunt, in S. James's Square, Brist 1, an un-

conventional arrangement which sprang from their common relation to Richard Reynolds the philanthropist, who had lived in this house with his two young relatives, and they saw no reason to keep house apart after his death. Dr. Bell was a charming old man and a great friend and benefactor of the Fry brothers."

*Memoir of Rt. Hon. Sir E. Fry: G. C. B.*

(*Agnes Fry*) Page 31.

Japanese school-girls have no illusions about politics and politicians, judging by essays on "Impressions of the General Election" by students of the Miwata Girls Higher School, one of the most fashionable girls schools in Tokio.

One starts her impressions with: "It makes me smile to see candidates recommending themselves to the voters" Then she launches a scathing attack on the type of M. P.'s the nation has been sending to the Diet. "It is a great crime to send to the sacred chamber of the national Diet men who must hide their 'dirty linen'. What use is there," she asks, "of electing old politicians with stale minds who have nothing to look back to except their records."

Her class-mate modestly claims to be a novice, as far as politics is concerned, but even to her, she writes, "there is nothing in Japan that is more corrupt than the political world." Nothing, she believes, will save this country from the present scandalous political condition except woman suffrage. She ends her writing on a hopeful tone: "If we had woman suffrage,.....wouldn't there arise a Joan of Arc who would save Japan?" Another girl is a fervent champion of the same idea. It is her conviction that what Japan wants at present to reform politics is feminine judgment, and not public opinion, as voiced by the male portion of the population "Away with the shameless men who imprudently stand in the 'Hall of Judgment,' and commit riots and disorders akin to children's tricks," she writes.

*Japan Times.*

The only means of preserving peace in Europe lies in universal disarmament.—*Duke of Wellington.*

## STAR-DUST

## II. BUSINESS

1. *England—Harbour Master.* A twenty-one year old girl, Stella Gale, has been appointed harbour-master at Paignton, Devon.

15 January 1929.

## III. ATHLETICS

1. *Swimming: Rescues.*—While spending the week end at Kippford, Arnold Beaty, of Carlisle, had a narrow escape from drowning, and owes his rescue to the promptitude and pluck of his daughter, Noreen Beaty, who is 18 years of age.

Beaty had taken a small party out in his motor boat. The engine of the boat ran slowly and Beaty bent down to attend to it. In resuming his seat on the gunwale, he overbalanced and fell into the sea. Beaty was a good swimmer, but he was wearing a pair of gun boots, and was unable to save himself. His daughter, however, went to the rescue. In a flash she was over the side of the boat and striking out towards her father, left in the wake of the motor boat. Diving under him she clutched her father, turned him over on to his back, and thus supported him. The others of the party put out the dinghy. To this she clung while still supporting her father, and the two were thus towed back to the motor boat. The party put back to Kippford, and Beaty was taken to the hotel. He was suffering so much from the shock that a doctor advised his removal to a Dumfries nursing home, to which he was taken.

*Cumberland News, September 1929.*

2. *Jockey.*—Newmarket, England, Oct. 11 1928—Four lady jockeys and two men participated in the historic Town Plate Horse Race to-day, which first, was run during the reign of Charles II. The course, over four miles, was in a heavy condition because of rain. Iris Rickaby, riding Bogus, was first, being followed closely by Heald on Duc de Guise. The others were D. Saunders on Fay

Toy and Eileen Joel, daughter of the millionaire Sol Joel, on Peacemaker. The four wore breeches, heavy riding boots, spurs and jockey caps.

## IV. ACADEMIC

1. *England: Electrical Engineering.*—Winifred Hackett (23), University of Birmingham, beat all the men in the Electrical Engineering department of the University and won a scholarship entitling her to a year's research course.

## VII. DRESS

1. *America.*—With her death has ended the career of Dr. Mary Victor Mayfield, who dressed as a man during most of her life, and is to be buried in masculine attire. She practised as a male doctor in many States before coming to Arkansas 13 years ago. She is said to have married a woman in Ohio, who divorced her for desertion. Her sex was discovered three years ago when she fell ill.

Dr. Mayfield is believed to have been over eighty years old, though her real age is as great a secret as her past life.

2. *England.*—The most amusing incident in the life of the late Lord Lanesborough occurred when he visited a local garden fete. Lord Lanesborough was interested in an ankle competition, and as he had remarkably small feet, he persuaded the officials to allow him to enter for a joke. He borrowed a pair of ladies' shoes, size five, and some silk stockings, entered the competition, and to the amazement of his fellow competitors who were naturally "in the know", he carried off the first prize. There were roars of laughter when the competitors emerged from behind the canvas screen which had hidden them from both judges and public.

## VIII.—LAW

1. *JUDGE (Sweden)* M. Trargott who has had a brilliant career at the University and in practice at the Bar, has accepted an appointment as a Judge.



## URANIA

### TO OUR FRIENDS.

**U**RANIA 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.

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, York House, Portugal Street, London, W. C.; E. Roper, 14 Frognal Gardens, London, N. W.; D. H. Cornish, 33, Kildare Terrace, Bayswater London, W.; T. Baty, Temple, London, E. C.

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