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URANIA

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URANIA

Nos. 85 & 86.

JANUARY—APRIL, 1931.

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*.

NATURE AND PROGRESS.

An odd idea has become curiously prevalent in these latter days, that a thing is right or admirable, if only it is “natural”:—by which is meant, if it is in conformity with one's physical nature.

All the odder is it, that this idea should be looked upon as particularly the characteristic of progressive thought, and enlightened intelligence. For the whole history of progress is the history of the conquest of “nature” by grace. If something had not come to modify their physical “nature,” we should still be in the mud with the pleisiosaurs! Improvement is our most “natural” impulse: we are always stretching out, consciously or blindly, for something beyond. A vegetable is bound by its bodily life. We are not vegetables: and what was “natural” to us yesterday will not be “natural” to us to-morrow.

If you deride the insignificant writer of these lines, you will not refuse to listen to ‘Æ’. “We have to assume mastery over that Nature which now overwhelms us...in that conflict between Titan and Zeus which is part of the never-ending struggle of the human spirit to assert its supremacy over Nature. We, who lie crushed by this mountain—Nature piled above us, must arise again, unite to storm the heavens and sit in the seats of this mighty... we must imagine ourselves into greatness.” “When the soul has the vision divine it knows not that it has a body. Let it remember, and the breath of glory kindles it no more: it is once more a captive.”

Pathetic are these words of Robert Graves—pathetic in their puzzled and frustrated worship of

bodily Nature—“I could not have believed that a natural process could be so painful and so messy!”

INSTINCT A MYTH.

“THAT kittens learn to hunt mice or rats only through imitation of older cats with which they are raised, is the recent discovery of Dr. Zing Yang Kuo, a Chinese psychologist, who has made a special study of feline psychology with reference to the animals, mouse or rat reactions. He finds that cats which pounce on mice at sight are displaying no inbred instinct, but are merely indulging an acquired taste like that of a human with a fondness for golf or for olives.

“Dr. Kuo discovered that young kittens raised with mice or rats are perfectly friendly and play with their supposedly hereditary enemies in complete good feeling without any thought of harming them.

“He found that a few of the kittens employed in the experiments, however, did display tendencies to attack rats of a different species than the ones they were acquainted with.

“He found that in the majority of cases, to arouse mouse hatred in the kittens he had to let them see some other older cat, especially their mother, chasing and hunting mice or rats. When this happens the kittens previously friendly to rats and mice turn completely around and many of them become vicious mousers, imitating their “grown ups.”

“Another test showed that even the cats' appetites for meat could be a matter of training. Cats raised on a strictly vegetable diet were found to have no liking either for live or dead mice or for

* The Renewal of Youth.

any other kinds of meat. Dr. Kuo believes that kittens from any litter can be raised into great mousers by associating them with grown cats that are known to be great mousers. They will soon learn all the tricks of mouse catching from their elders."

—*Japan Times*, February 7, 1931.

"Apparently, there is no instinctive enmity between cat and rat. Kittens are merely imitating their mothers when they begin to hunt.

Recent experiments that prove this are described in the *Journal of Comparative Psychology* and summarized in the *Science News Letter*, a Science Service publication (Washington). We read:

"A kitten may grow up to be a battling ratter, or it may go through life as a peaceable friend of the rat tribe. It all depends on the kitten's early experiences in this world.

"This is shown by a Chinese psychologist, Zing Yang Kuo, of the University of Chekiang, who has brought up fifty-nine kittens in his laboratory, and has closely observed the introduction of every one of them to rats and mice in varying circumstances.

"Some of the kittens were put in isolated cages and shielded for the first week of life from knowing that a creature like a rat existed. Other kittens were given rats or mice for social companions almost from birth. Still other baby kittens got an early introduction to the race war between cat and rat by watching their mothers expertly dispatch rats. Some of the kittens were brought up to be vegetarians, and others had a more liberal cat diet of meat and fish along with milk and rice.

"Of the twenty-one kittens raised in an environment where their mothers killed rats, 85 per cent. of the kittens killed a rat before reaching the age of four months. Of the twenty kittens kept in a ratless environment only 45 per cent. killed rats without being taught. None of the kittens raised with rats ever killed one of its playmates, or any rat of its kind. Only three of the eighteen kittens so raised killed other kinds of rats.

"Being vegetarian does not make a kitten less keen as a rat-hunter, the experiment indicated. But most of the vegetarian kittens would not eat the rats that they killed. In fact, after three to

four months of a meatless diet, the vegetarian kittens refused any meat. Being hungry does not spur on a cat to rat-hunting, the Chinese psychologist reports.

"The cat is a small-sized tiger, equipped with a bodily machine fitted for capturing small animals, the Chinese psychologist points out. But the cat's potential career as a hunter is modified by its life conditions. The explanation that a cat hunts rats by 'instinct' is entirely inadequate, according to this experimenter, who is 'impressed by the fact that the behaviour of the cat toward the rat is much more complex and much more variable than most psychologists would have thought.'

"But why teach the cats to love the rats? Is the peace movement to extend to the animal kingdom, and is this the first step in a back-to-Eden campaign? On this point we are told:

"The purpose of his investigations, which are still in progress, is to understand animal behaviour sufficiently so that with all factors taken into account, an animal's behaviour can be predicted.

"Our study shows that kittens can be made to kill a rat, to love it, to hate it, to fear it, or to play with more refined methods, with more thorough investigation in this direction, and with more knowledge of the physiology of the cat's behaviour. We should be able to predict in mathematical terms how a given cat will react to a given rat at a given moment."

(*Literary Digest*).

"An extremely interesting case of what we may call tradition among animals (in this case not wild) is taken from the writings of Hudson. He describes the complete change of habits which accompanied and followed the famous Muzzling Order of 1897, 'which restrained dogs throughout the country from following their ancient custom of quarrelling with and biting one another, for the unprecedented period of two and a half years.' As a result of this period of restraint the practice of fighting practically died out among the London dogs, and Hudson describes his surprise when he noticed this, and his still further astonishment when he found that the change in habits was not merely temporary, but continued ever after. Dog-fights, instead of being daily events, had practically died out. This example illustrates very well

the manner in which a new idea or a new habit might become perpetuated in a wild species, without any organic inheritance of germinal mutations being concerned at all. This process would cause evolution along a purely mental plane."

From *Animal Ecology and Evolution*,
by Charles Elton. CLAREDON PRESS.

If Dr. Zing Yang Kuo's conclusions are correct, great light will be shed on the vexed question of "Instinct". When we do not know why animals behave as they do in any particular, we cover up our ignorance by labelling their motive "Instinct". Sometimes a rational explanation is offered; for instance, it is suggested that a bird sits on its eggs because there is something comforting to its breast nerves in the smooth, round ball. Instinct can be deceived—a pot egg which will never hatch will do; and insects will be attracted by an artificial flower. It is fair to conclude that in all cases of animal "instinct", a rational explanation like that of the hen with its egg might be found. Mankind, with its inborn love of the mysterious and the marvellous, and its inherent laziness, prefers to ascribe the animal's behaviour to a mysterious, unintelligible and incomprehensible something termed Instinct. Once this myth of a mysterious, unaccountable something is accepted, the way is open to transfer its operation from animals to human beings. A "sexual instinct", an "instinct of self preservation", are postulated, which are really only names for perfectly intelligible desires. Acts performed without volition, such as breathing, hiccupping, sneezing, fall in a different category. Nobody calls these "instinctive".

Now, Dr. Zing Yang Kuo shows that the supposed mouse-catching "instinct" of kittens is, in the main, not a mysterious kittenish anti-mouse urge at all; but an implanted taste imparted to the kitten by example. Just in the same way, the supposed mysterious mannish or womanish "sexual instinct" is nothing but an implanted taste fostered by universal inculcation.

COEDUCATION A SUCCESS.

THE Incorporated Association of Head Masters of secondary schools in England and Wales,

through its "Mixed Schools Committee," has expressed itself in favour of co-education.

The association points out in a memorandum that when the movement was in its early stages considerable dangers were anticipated, but results have proved them to have been groundless ...

Mutual consideration is more likely to be learned by association than by separation, it appeared.

The committee reports that girls have proven perfectly able to follow the same curriculum as boys. In fact it is their opinion that the presence in the school of both boys and girls tends to develop special capacities of each to the highest.

But it is on the social side, it is stated, that the Mixed Schools have been able to make their most distinct contribution to the educational weal. They have produced men and women capable of working sensibly side by side in the profession or in business and—a very high test—capable of meeting in friendliness and without frivolity in intelligent recreation.

—*Japan Times*, January 24, 1931.

SUFFRAGE MEETINGS IN JAPAN.

"RESOLVED, That we want immediate acquirement of full political rights for the fair sex, and we therefore put ourselves on record as pronouncedly opposed to the Government Bill of limited Women's Citizenship; and also that we are in for the passage through both the Upper and Lower House during the current session, of a bill proposing recognition of women's right to participate in political organizations."

The above were resolutions passed by the mass meeting of the Japanese suffragettes on Saturday noon at the Sankaido Hall, Akasaka, under the joint auspices of the Women's Suffrage League and two other organizations interested in the movement for women's political rights.

No less than 1000 representatives of the suffragettes were present from all parts of the Empire, including Hokkaido and Kagoshima.

Following an opening address from Fusae Ichikawa, and announcement of messages and congratulatory addresses from various bodies of supporters, speeches were launched by both male and female orators in the cause of women's suffrage.

The meeting then passed the resolution which will be referred to the Presidents of the different Parties, as well as to the President of the Upper and of the Lower House.

By way of demonstration, a specially prepared drama entitled "Women's Suffrage is the Key" was staged at the Senkaido Hall, at six the same evening.

—*Japan Times, February 18, 1931.*

JAPANESE EQUALITY CLUB.

THE "Bunka Gakuin Club", the pioneer social club of young men and young women of ultra-modern ideas, who are attempting to break away from the shackles of old conventions and customs that have separated the sexes in Japan for ages has just been inaugurated here.

The club is founded on the principle of the equality of sexes. It places no discrimination on either. The club frankly recognizes the necessity of well-guided social intercourse between the sexes as a means to a natural development of each.

Its organizers are teachers, graduates and students of the pioneer co-educational institution in Japan, the Bunka Gakuin, and others who are in sympathy with the modern movement for the liberation of youth.

—*Japan Times, February 18, 1931.*

INTER-FEMININE ADMIRATIONS.

FROM my childhood, I have liked to admire certain persons whom I have found among my teachers or my friends or even in my favourite books. Though some of them upon whom my imagination has worked too much, have given me the sorrow of disillusionment when I have known them intimately, all of them have been the adored friends and comforts of my lonely life.

As a little girl in a kindergarten I had the peculiarity of liking girls better than boys. (Japanese little girls in general enjoyed themselves in playing with boys, though afterwards they were forced to separate.) I loved girls so much that when my mother asked me, "Whose bride will you become?", which was a joke to children in my pro-

vince, I answered with a serious face, "Mother, I won't marry a boy. I would like to marry a girl."

On entering a primary school the first heroine impressed in my heart was the young beautiful teacher named Kawai in charge of my class. I liked and admired Kawai San so that I could imagine nobody more beautiful, greater, and better than she in the world. When she told us many interesting stories of Japanese history, or when she sang beautiful songs for us, I felt as happy as if I were in paradise. I learnt my lessons well, for it was my greatest joy to be taught by Kawai San, and it was my greatest pride to be praised by her. Finally, I made up my mind to become an elementary school teacher like her in the future. Just at that time, the youngest brother of my uncle, having finished his university course, was asking my uncle to let him study in England for three more years. When I saw my young uncle dejected, for his brother had refused to give him such a great sum of money I asked him, "Uncle, how much will you need for your study in England?"

"It costs more than you can count. It is about ten thousand Yen. But, why?" said my uncle with a smile.

"Please don't be discouraged, uncle! I will be a primary school teacher, you know. Then I will make you go abroad!" Cried I with my eyes full of hopes.

"Thank you!" laughed he.

However, with the extension of my knowledge and friendships and the shadow of Kawai San and my attraction for a primary school teacher passed gradually from my heart and I became a high-school student. Through my happy school life, when at times I was excited with joy and happiness, and at times I wept with sentimentalism, how many persons I loved and admired! Nobuko Yoshiya! With her flower-stories that appeared in girls' magazines, how deeply she charmed me! I would find myself weeping for the heroines of the flower stories who sacrificed themselves for their loving friends, or find myself meditating on Yoshiya San in the beautiful twilight of my room. Gradually, I felt myself drawn to the novelist. If I were such a great writer as Yoshiya San and could write such beautiful stories as the Flower Stories, how glad I would be! Yoshiya San seem-

ed to me a person greater than a genius, greater than all the women in the world. I still believe that no girl who reads *Flower Stories* but likes and admires Yoshiya San. Not only I, but all my classmates were admirers of Yoshiya San. We could not spend a day without putting the name of Yoshiya San in our conversation.

"Let us start a Yoshiya Club!"

"That's a good idea! Then how shall we begin?"

"We shall have a meeting once a week and talk over the works of Yoshiya San. Shall we write letters to her?"

"Yes, please write, Teiko San, as the representative of our group, and tell her that we admire her so greatly that we should be very glad to die for her!"

But Yoshiya-worship made us students neglect our study a little.

"Sano San! What are you reading behind your book? Let me see it!" one day our history mistress cried angrily. Sano San was reading a novel of Yoshiya's under cover of her text-book.

"Who is this? Nobuko Yoshiya? I don't know who she is, but you must not read a story by such a person" said the mistress.

"Why? Sato San, why must I not read it? Yoshiya San,—she is the person I admire most. I like and love her so much!" said Sano San and she began to cry.....

At last, we came to model our own friendships upon *Flower Stories*. It became very fashionable among us to have serious attachments, though consequently we had little troubles caused by the jealousy of other girls. I found a good friend whom I loved and admired just as the heroines of *Flower Stories* loved their friends. We made a plan that we two would never marry, but keep house together. But soon she began to suffer from tuberculosis.

"Will you be my bosom friend for ever?" She said to me one evening.

"Yes, I have promised you to be your friend forever? Why do you ask?" said I.

"My sickness is serious, as you see. I think that I shall never recover. After I am gone, please don't forget me?" she repeated, and big tears rolled down her cheeks.

"I believe that you will recover. But if you happen to die, I shall die with you," said I, imagin-

ing myself a heroine of the *Flower Stories* of Yoshiya.

(from "Persons Whom I Admire" by Aguri Takahashi).

THE POSITION OF JAPANESE WOMEN.

By Mook Joya, in the *Japan Christian Intelligencer*.

In most Oriental countries women generally occupy a position lower and inferior to that of men, and it is commonly believed that the Japanese women occupy a similar position as one of their Oriental characteristics. However, the reason why the Japanese women came to occupy their present position is not native. Originally they occupied equal positions with men. It was the militaristic feudal system which did not recognize the value of women and the Chinese influence that caused the lowering of the position of women in Japan. Our history proves that women occupied important positions and received the respect of the people in the early days.

The first position in the Japanese pantheon is assigned to a goddess. The Imperial throne was often occupied by Empress. There were many women chiefs of tribes, and in ancient times women led armies. They were accorded high positions, and there is not to be found any oppression of women by men.

The introduction of Buddhism to Japan owes much to women. During 165 years, from 593 to 758, no less than seven Empresses reigned, and they were instrumental in spreading Buddhism in Japan. The highly spectacular aspects of the Indian religion appealed specially to the taste of women, and the above mentioned Empresses were all earnest leaders of the Buddhist faith.

In the early records of the country, there is not a single incident that shows any ill-treatment of women by men, women always enjoying equal right and position, although they could not be the head of Uji, as that position was given to the eldest son.

In the classical literature of Japan, women occupy a very prominent position. Among poets of the early days, women have been famous, but in the 11th century two women gave the Japanese literature two works of the highest merit. They are

Genj-Monogatari and Makura-no-Zoshi. The former was written by Murasaki Shikibu and is the first novel written in Japan. Makura-no-Zoshi was written by Sei-Shonagon, a noble lady, and it gives a good picture of the court life of the period.

Thus women took a leading part in pure Japanese literature, but with the introduction of Chinese classics, the taste of the time turned to writing after the Chinese style. This difficult foreign literature was adopted by men, who studied them for the sake of securing official positions. The government instructions and laws came to be written in Chinese language. Women, however, kept to the native tongue, and therefore even in the common spoken language, quite a difference was gradually brought about between that of men and that of women. Men used Chinese phrases and words, while women exclusively used the native Yamato language. This difference even today can be traced in our language: the language of women is softer and that of men more of the stiff Chinese style.

This introduction of the Chinese literature caused the loss of position of women in Japanese literature, although they kept their fame in the field of Japanese poems. Men mostly took to writing Chinese poems. The influence of Chinese teachings, and the uprise of military leaders and also the continued war, caused Japanese women to lose their original position. The teaching of China slighted womanhood, and as it found ready welcome among the educated people of Japan, the original idea towards women gradually changed to the Chinese conception.

What caused the final change in the position of women, however, was the rise of the military class. Being always in wars, and military strength being the only thing really counted during the period of wars, women, who could not fight in battles, naturally were regarded as useless dependents. It was in this period that women's sphere of activity became particularly domestic. They were regarded as convenient servants to keep house and look after children. Not being of any help to fighting men, their value was counted only in their domestic tasks.

However, up to the 15th century, the wife was privileged to own her own properties and even when her husband's property was confiscated, her property was free. This also changed with the further development of feudalism.

Under the continued feudal system, women came to be regarded as mere domestics whose main task was to look after the household duties; and in the society and public, which considered the military strength as the highest accomplishment of value, women occupied the lowest position.

But this, again, brought out beautiful traits of womanhood, obedience, timidity, and well-mannered habits. While during the 700 years of the feudal time, there were little manifestations of women's activity, or ability in public or literary circles, they succeeded to perfect the art of decorating houses and managing household affairs, and bringing up children. During this period, women were not given the same education as given to men, and were mostly left in ignorance.

While boys learned military acts and Chinese classics, girls were only taught in the etiquettes of service, and cooking, house decoration, musical and other domestic arts. From this came the common word still in use expressing the lady of the house "Okusan," (the lady of the back room).

The Tokugawa period of peace, however, brought a certain, though limited, change in the position of women. In the circle of the warrior class, little change was seen as their military abilities were considered all important, and strict conventional ideas on women remained. But among the common people, specially the trade people, a marked change was seen in this respect. With peace and prosperity, these people came to assert themselves in many different ways. In the families of such common people, works and duties falling on women were much larger and important than in the military circles. Wives and daughters of such people had not only to look after the domestic tasks, but also had to take charge of business matters when occasion demanded as in case of the illness or absence of their parents or husbands. Consequently in the trade circles women came to enjoy almost equal rights and position as men. In the farming districts also, women worked just as hard as men on

the fields, and they always enjoyed more rights and privileges than their city sisters.

Even today the women of agricultural districts or of the trading circles have more rights than those of the so called upper classes.

With the Meiji Restoration, women were liberated from their former position, but the lack of training and education during so many centuries is greatly handicapping the development of the Japanese women in recent days. The social conditions, the inherited thoughts, and habits long established are holding back their advancement.

Japanese women were held in a lower position not by their lack of merits, but by a special situation caused by the militaristic development and the Chinese influence. They will gradually regain their original position of equality to men, but the process will not be accomplished in a short time. The habits and influence of many centuries are hard to break, but the barrier is fast being pulled down by the efforts of women themselves.

WHY NOT?

"It says here that girls are to be truly feminine this year." "Why can't they leave us alone, and let us be natural?"

EQUALITY IN AVIATION.

The Minister of Communications, Matajiro Koizumi, invited the women fliers of Japan to a tea at the Imperial Hotel to encourage them not to be beaten by men, and had an unexpected verbal bomb thrown at him, when the diminutive Kaneko Kitamura, a noted journalist and prospective aviatrix, censured his department for its refusal to grant first class pilot's certificates to women, branding this discriminatory attitude an insult to the women of Japan.

The Minister had invited this attack, for he had told his fair guests that just because they were women, was no reason for them to concede first place to men fliers.

"Japan has had great women from time immemorial, like the Empress Jingu who led an expeditionary force to Korea. You should not be beaten by men just because you are women.

At present the conquerors of the air have become the rulers of the land. The women fliers of Japan consequently have important responsibilities, and a great work to do for the country. I hope you do it well."

Kaneko Kitamura immediately replied:

"We have not the least idea of being inferior to men aviators, or of allowing them to monopolize all the honors of the air. A future, however, is denied us, by the refusal of the air authorities to grant us first-class pilot's licenses, which is an insult to the fair sex of Japan."

Among those present were Koizumi San's daughter, his secretary, the president of the Tokyo Air Transport Company, Aiba San; the head of the Aviation Bureau, Togawa San, and the fliers, Kaneko Kitamura San, Keigen Boku San and Katsuyo Motozumi San all of the Nihon Aviation School; Aiko Kawabe San of the Toa Aviation School, Suzuko Uenaka San of the Ito Aviation School, and the three air service girls of the Tokyo Air Transport Company, Hideko Motoyama San, Masako Wada San and Yukie Kudo San.

—*Japan Times, April 4, 1931.*

VEGETARIANISM.

NINE young women, who lived four weeks on a diet costing 23 cents a day apiece, today were pronounced by physicians fitter, fatter and fairer.

These three F's were acquired on a diet which included no meat, butter or milk. Eggs were on it, however, while peanut and soy bean products joined with cottage cheese, oranges and tomatoes in furnishing the needed ingredients. They had food left over at the end of the test.

The experimenters were two instructors and seven students at the Washington Missionary College. The Government's Bureau of Home Economics made up the menus.

—*Japan Times, March 13, 1931.*

A CHRISTMAS IDYLL.

There were three mages of the East
Went bearing gifts to make a feast
And came to Bethlehem.

URANIA

The first mage brought of frankincense
Full goodly store for reverence
In woven anadem;

The second, in his mantle's fold,
Bare beaten silver and red gold;
Whiles for an harbinger

There flamed a strange white Star in Heaven,
Waxen more bright than planets seven;
The third mage carrieth myrrh.

All weary in a tavern shed
Lay Mary that was brought to bed
Of Godis only Son.

And Mary had for handmaidens
Three women that were never men's
To wive as all men wonn.

Two damsels were right fair and sweet,
The third wore over hands and feet
Amber from sea-side ts'en;

And Mary's cloke was soft with fur
And a gold girdle belted her
Of writhen serpents twain.

Three mages stand upon the straw.
They lifted up their eyne and saw
The Blessed Babe and laid

Down treasures of bright Eastern kings—
Spikenard and gems and finger rings
And pearls and purple and jade—

Whereat a golden beam of light
Fell in slant wise athwart the night
And Angels thronged thereon

Came caroling from the Halls of Heaven,
"Lo, unto us a Child is given
And unto us a Son!"

—J. U. N. in the *Japan Times*.