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Notes on Book, "The Glass of Fashion"

Earl Clement Davis

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Gome Sovial Reflections by a Heatherm with a Durter by Prestrans & Sais 1921. Fally, votvice, is the eveny, the same is not original sin but original stuficlity." The object of this book is to convince feofle of two truths hitherto obscured by tolerance and careles thicking - the danger of folly! the volve to a liberal State of a walist aristoreray."

Choff. I. Priv wife of the Covern would.

That by the Triumpho of the bottle field and the forman mies the Communewalth reals to be justified.

but by The character, and the arfluence, the volle ex = awfle and the inspiring mewory of its men and womens" Thot is to my the meaning of England is neither infuir him nor that slavery, but work Charocter, She is the very autitheries of Brussianum, , and the very autifodes of Bolshevine, Her shough, fruer, and daminion lie in vo working of state, but in the word character of her indimidal sitizens." England, still for short of her ideal stands in a world of many clinere dortures, and a writel at many different levels of ximilization, for Liberty + character." Poge 13,

Hear of Fortier. But how is forhim me eximing of to the requirements of Likely + character Terlinal Refington's Dianies." and Chy. III Thus arguittes autobirgofly. -Arth med a squieve fliffmey, a lach of inward Earnestury as empared with his Glastotine a Glachture, of the nictures ferrior, Effect of this Tipe of Forbins on the witin is very great wedness bod. The faultrum deef. See chofter on Manney, Chy III. " the forsers in flace of an aristocracy of eveluce a formerful and symirol flutraccy which is as

whely given to the worship of Tunwors or any votins of heather times. P. 122. He (the Englishow) rolls it may both warmers to chees lovely, to took at the tif of the rive, to wrke a cliffly of juvelley, to conduct to have treed stutotively, to be fullful, voiry, extravogut, shony, and brozen! Hums dief, Chofter XI - Conslusion. Ly the course of this erroy I have advinced sections; frofortions which way be summarized for fillows; -Fashins, because of its constituous fusition in the State, exercises the greatest of all influences on the notions" The influences of worden Fashin are injurious

To the feaceful evolution of the British armoundedth, being the influences of ortentation, self-includgence, laurleinners, equirien, and frivolity." The influence of Swignity is not to be so greatly feared by the nation or the influence of Folly." It is by the domestic door, nother than the economic, That vidence enters the state." The social, folitical, and word health of a com = munity defends mainly your its attitude towards life, that is to my its theory of existance! "In a rational theory of existance it is infamille To divorce line from its context of sterrily, flace from

its evitest of infinity, man from his context of evolution.

"at the head of a notion then should an aristornize
of intelligence where wanner of life exhibits the truck
of this theory,"

A book with a seuse of the reality of word volues, but confines word forwar with the word chroater (See Chf. IIII. The forms of as forsing generation the victorion age affect to the author, guile regardles, it would seem of their work ethical content, and yet he realizes that some how every act, and every ferror is measured by this col Standards.

200

The Glass of Forhiers

filgringe though vanily Fair, (mayor asputs outs by pople) which never these leaves so much to be said, I formed the following farry:

"An impettered children and trimethant youth; a lot of love-making and a little above; a little fame and work above; a real man and great toffiness; the love of children and seventh heaven; an early death and a consided memorial service."

Pore 55

The Glass of Torhurs, Poze 118. XI hur liquith show of a summery of her history and her arfirotions. The last of there arfirotions was for a consed menorial source: luice dorly Frances Balfor defend The volgarity of some which in spice that asfiration! Is there not in this fassion for a last crowd, as it were a last andience, something that stocks us in the defthe of our nature wors than the sine of the wich is to be leaved from that fliff very.

Does it not mitners to are immeure devolation x2 of the woman's kexit? She dues not done to be aline with herself even in the grave, She world fore the farhimable world and the strongers of The illustrated forers, as near her eiffin as buriel mil femit. as the tree falls, so would it lie. as she has sown, so would she reaf, what bulgarily, 1.0ge 118-119_

The Mare of Forhier X 3 "If there is one great and controlling frinciple "oze 124. in the behavior of the average good Englishman it is the fries fle of useus." This virtue is not always the highest virtue of moderty; but it makes for the suisteet. The characteristic Englishmen does not advertise either his farities or his farsenions. HE Rall it very bord manner to oher loudly, to talk at the top of the voice, to make a display of jewelling, To conclust a house tokal astentationaly, to be furtiful, worry, extravogant, story, and brazer; there things he regards as both forms. They true wo temptations for him, They are distantefue.

These vulgar feofle have used woney to advertise their maies, and now world use the worry made by that advertisement to advertise themselves. The stop mischer is transferred from sommercial to social life. Keseme in business would be ruis. reserve in social life would be suicicle, as They attracted the fublic to buy their govels, so they would attact aristocracy to a Norwledge of their arrival in Vanity Fair, they advertise their existance by hanging their women with jewels, by building folative foreses, and by giving entertainments which in every detail flack mealth in the eyer of their favorite manney.

Cornicle There fewfer, there, their may of life, their habits, Their manners, the very times of Their voices! look at There attentively, where the literature they read. The things which give them fleasure, the words which some forth out of their mouther, the thoughts which make the furniture of their minds, world any ownered of wealth he worth having with The condition that one was to become ful like there feefle by having it?" Eited in The Hun of Fishin. Page 113

It is the successions, rather than the conscious, which is the instraut factor in feromolety and intelligence. The unconscious fusionsher the formaline material out of which our judgements, om heliefes, our scheols, and our characters an shafed Morton Prince sited in The Glair of Fashion! Poge 137.

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Notes on

The Glass of Fashion¹

By a "Gentleman with a Duster"

New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1921

Lancaster, PA

September 14, 1922

Introduction

Folly, not vice, is the enemy. Our curse is not original sin but original stupidity.²

The object of this book is to convince people of two truths hitherto obscured by tolerance and careless thinking—the danger of folly! The value to a liberal state of a valid aristocracy.

Chapt. I: Principles of the Commonwealth

Not by the triumph of the battlefield and the forum will the Commonwealth seek to be justified, but by the character and the influence, the noble example and the inspiring memory of its men and women.

That is to say, the meaning of England is neither Imperialism nor State Slavery, but Moral Character. She is the very antithesis of Prussianism, and the very antipodes of Bolshevism. Her strength, power, and dominion lie

¹ The envelope with title, "The Glass of Fashion by the [pseudonym] 'Gentleman with a Duster,' Notes on" included a manuscript with Earl Davis' hand-written notes—largely quotations from—The Glass of Fashion: Some Social Reflections. A separate envelope contained Earl Davis' notes on the earlier book, The Mirrors of Downing Street, by the same pseudonymous author.

² Much—but not all—of the text in this document appears to be transcribed by Earl Davis from the book, *The Glass of Fashion*. Direct quotations are indented.

in no machinery of State, but in the moral character of her individual citizens.

England, still far short of her ideal, stands in a world of many diverse doctrines, and a world at many different levels of civilization, for Liberty and Character. (Page 15.)

But how is fashion measuring up to the requirements of Liberty and Character?

Chap II + III: Colonel Repington's Diaries
Chap IV + V: Mrs. Asquith's Autobiography
Both reveal a cynical flippancy, a lack of inward
earnestness as compared with Mr. Gladstone or Gladstone of
the Victorian period.

Effect of this Life of Fashion on the virtues is very great and very bad. The fault runs deep. See chapter on Manners, Chap. VIII.

We possess in place of an aristocracy of culture a powerful and cynical plutocracy which is as wholly given to the worship of Mammon as any nation of heathen times. (p. 122)

He [the Englishman] calls it very bad manners to dress loudly, to talk at the top of the voice, to make a display of jewelry, to conduct a household ostentatiously, to be pushful, noisy, extravagant, showy, and brazen... [p. 124.]

It runs deep.

Chap XI: Conclusion

In the course of this essay I have advanced certain propositions which may be summarized as follows:

Fashion, because of its conspicuous position in the State, exercises the greatest of all influences on the nation.

The influences of modern Fashion are injurious to the peaceful evolution of the British Commonwealth, being the influences of ostentation, self-indulgence, lawlessness, cynicism, and frivolity.

The influence of Iniquity is not to be so greatly feared by a nation as the influence of Folly.

It is by the domestic door, rather than the economic, that violence enters a State.

The social, political, and moral health of a community depends mainly upon its attitude towards life, that is to say, it theory of existence.

In a rational theory of existence it is impossible to divorce time from its context of eternity, place from its context of infinity, man from his context of evolution.

At the head of a nation there should be an aristocracy of intelligence whose manner of life exhibits the truth of this theory. [pp. 167-168.]

A book with a sense of the reality of the moral values, but confuses moral forms with the moral character. (See Chap. VIII). The forms of a passing generation, the Victorian age, appeal to the author, quite regardless, it would seem, of their real ethical content, and yet he realizes that some form [of] every act, and every person, is measured by ethical standards.

The remaining pages of this manuscript are direct quotations from the book

Mrs. Asquith drew up a summary of her history and her aspirations. The last of those aspirations was for "a crowded memorial service." Will Lady Frances Balfour defend the vulgarity of soul which inspired that aspiration? Is there not in this passion for a last crowd, as it were a last audience, something that shocks us in the depths of our nature more than the sins of the weak and the uneducated?

Much is to be learned from that flippancy. Does it not witness to an immense desolation of the woman's heart? She does not dare to be alone with herself even in the grave. She would have the fashionable world, and the photographers of the illustrated papers, as near her coffin as burial will permit. As the tree falls, so would it lie. As she has sown, so would she reap. What vulgarity! (page 118-119.)

If there is one great and controlling principle in the behavior of the average good Englishman it is the principle of reserve.

This virtue is not always the higher virtue of modesty, but it makes for that virtue. The characteristic Englishman does not advertise either his position or his possessions. He calls it very bad manners to dress loudly, to talk at the top of the voice, to make a display of jewelry, to conduct a household ostentatiously, to be pushful, noisy, extravagant, showy, and brazen; these things he regards as "bad form." They have no temptations for him. They are distasteful. (Page 124.)

These vulgar people have used money to advertise their wares, and now would use the money made by that advertisement to advertise themselves. The shop window is transferred from commercial to social life. Reserve in business would be ruin; reserve in social life would be suicide. As they attracted the public to buy their goods, so they would attract the aristocracy to a knowledge of their arrival in Vanity Fair. They advertise their existence by hanging their women with jewels, by building palatial houses, and by giving entertainments which in every detail flash wealth in the eyes of their parasitic guests. [pp. 124-125.]

[Chapter VIII:] Manners.

Consider these people, then, their way of life, their habits, their manners, the very tones of their voices; look at them attentively; observe the literature they read, the things which give them pleasure, the words which come forth out of their mouths, the thoughts which make the furniture of their minds; would any amount of wealth be worth having with the condition that

one was to become just like these people by having it? -Matthew Arnold (cited in *The Glass of Fashion*, page 113.)

[Chapter IX: Examples in Love]

It is the unconscious, rather than the conscious, which is the important factor in personality and intelligence. The unconscious furnishes the formative material out of which our judgments, our beliefs, our ideals, and our characters are shaped.—Morton Prince (cited in The Glass of Fashion, page 137.)