

WOMEN OF NEW YORK'S SMART SET LIVE IN LIMELIGHT OF PUBLICITY, SAYS VANCE THOMPSON

By VANCE THOMPSON.

EVENING in New York, a new dance hall—cabaret—wine cellar—was being opened. Were you in Paris you would find a dozen such nocturnal taverns within a cat's call of the "Folie Pigalle" girls, tolerably professional, capered in and out among the tables. There was drink and there was food. And there was music—the strident kind of music that pleases the simple and ruthless savage, because it is the noise of catgut and sonorous wood.

Outside was a huddle of motor cars. From the motor cars the smart set had descended. In order to be familiar with the smart set of New York one need not be of it. One has but to read the newspapers. For this smart set differs from every other smart set in the world in this: It lives in the glass house of journalism. It makes love in double columns of type under the limelight of search heads; and there, too, it is given in marriage and taken in adultery.

So the smart set went down into the cellar. And the girls, imprecisely professional, capered. The acrobatic cabaret danced and sang. The orchestra would not be still. Awd and thrilled at the mad gesticulation of the smart set looked on and whispered its comments. It had come to see how the "middle classes" amused themselves and it was itself amused.

"Why, they seem quite nice people," said a debutante—she was a debutante because she had not yet been divorced; it was the last thing one would have thought of saying. With the pretty exultance of one discovering a new animal at the zoo, she pointed out a fat man. "Why, it's Diamond Jim Brady," she said. The smart set awarded itself the pleasure of staring at Diamond Jim Brady. And drank, and seemed none the better for the drink. Then (the newspaper artists and writers had arrived) the smart set took the floor and tangoed. It was, in its way, an interesting exhibition. It sent one's thoughts back to the Dead End and the Red Mill of Paris—it was so different.

And why—you ask, having a philosophical mind—should the smart set dive into a cellar and drink and dance and riot in an atmosphere of violent perfumes and more violent perspiration? Was it for the Diamond Jims and the Sapphire Cecils of Broadway? By no means; it was all done for the pale, intellectual men of the newspapers who sat sharpening lead pencils in a corner. Society was dancing, not in a cellar, but in the newspapers. And the next day the blue names of New York aristocracy—all the stately patronymics of hard and bacon and wet goods and dry goods and carpets, which the "middle classes" walk upon—were skied in the press. Nice women, too, some of them. Mild young millionaires, who dine with the Sheriff and get on grand juries and write lawyer-like articles on socialism. And the "older set"—perched on divers rungs of the ladder of age and obesity—kept them company and lent dignity to the subterranean orgy of sweat and smoke and champagne.

One modest matron dressed in a murrey colored gown that almost hid her ankles danced, and as she danced she chewed the end of a ribbon—the other end of which was concealed—as the police say—about her person. It may have been a new fashion; I do not know; perhaps she was only eating her corset string.)

As we went out I said to a man: "Why do they do it? That sort of thing, I mean. In the older and more

Writer Thinks They Differ From Every Other Smart Set in the World for They Live in the Glass House of Journalism

absolute equality with man in his pleasures, his crimes, his sports and his private life of making an ass of himself or any other kind of a beast he pleases. You may travel over forty degrees of latitude in Europe without seeing the like—except among the criminal classes of the great cities and a few seaports like Spozzia.

In the Western States women went to the work of their liberation another way. They began at the top. What the well bred woman of the East wanted, wanted was the right to share in the making and administering of laws; she has not come yet to the New York woman's ambition to ruffle it—like a man and a bad man—in the dance halls of the underworld. It is, I believe, only the New York woman who takes her equality that way. And she is the woman—nine out of ten of her—who doesn't "want to vote." It isn't smart. It isn't being done this season—even in London it's gone out.

But the women of the people? In New York there are no women of the people. Bar a few women who write, paint, nurse, scrub out office buildings or teach higher mathematics, all the women of New York are heart-broken and heart-breaking imitations of the smart set. If you happen to be in the streets before 8 o'clock in the morning you will see them going to work in shops and stores and factories—the most amazing, sad sight in all the world.

Their little curvaceous are clad in scant, slilt, fashionable looking gowns; they wear high heeled shoes; they display their cold little legs in cheap bright stockings of imitation silk; on their shoulders they pile the skins of cats; lank green-eyed feathers nod from their poor tawdry hats—and so they promenade. Their little empty stomachs through the winter streets to their shops of daily toil. Ridiculous. It is at once ridiculous and pathetic. Seen at the distance this shop girl might be any one of the "younger set." From heel to head she is dressed in a poor, cheap imitation of the smart set. She is a parody of all its fads of dress and fashion; and if it is really the smart thing to chew the end of one's corset string when one is tangoing or hesitating, you may be sure the shop girl will chew the end of her corset string—like the rest of us girls.

And that is the truth. The women of the people in New York are a bitter, bitter parody of the pretty, perfumed, bawling women who are known in the newspapers as the smart set. And going about the streets you hunger for the sight of a little "middle-nette" hatless, black skirted, a frank little working woman, or a red faced applewoman in honest wooden shoes, or any kind of a woman who is not trying to be something she is not and never can be.

The average New Yorker is like every other decent and domesticated American. He is house broken and trained to carry the market basket. He is quite willing that woman should have her own way. He is a married man and he likes it; he is used to the peasant tranquility of methodized oppression. Possibly he might prefer to attend to an evening to sit by his steam radiator in his six by five drawing room and be talked to, but so long as the women want to kick and dip in the dance houses he will lead them to it.

has put a woman at the head of its jails and prisons. Miss Katharine Bennett Davis is Commissioner of Correction. With splendid energy Miss Davis set about her business of being Commissioner. One day, unfortunately, there was one serious handicap—she was a woman, and a New York woman at that. Her first public act (after being photographed) was to visit the Blackwell's Island penitentiary. What she saw horrified her.

"An spirit of restlessness prevails on the island," said Miss Davis. "I would not, however, compare it to anything bordering on a mutiny. I attribute it to a desire for notoriety." (A desire for notoriety? Think of that haggard prisoner, lying on the humid straw, plotting mutiny in order to get his name in the papers—as though he were one of the smart set!)

What Miss Davis did was this: She gave the order to carry clubs because of the knowledge she gained of the unrest and insubordination of the

used then to tame the most unruly of the prisoners. The next day Miss Davis made this supplementary announcement: "I want to say that the guards have not been supplied with clubs, that is I would not call them clubs. They have sticks. These sticks are effective weapons, but are not so cruel as clubs." Sticks, not clubs; let there be no mistake; a club is a nasty, cruel piece of wood, while the stick is slimmer and more ladylike.

Weak people are always talking about efficiency—in a pathetic attempt to convince themselves they are not inefficient. Timid folk walk the world hung with revolvers. The sweetest minded woman's idea of authority is a club—that is, I would call them sticks. The New York woman smacks her baby. She does not smack it to make it rodden and howl; she smacks it to affirm her own personality. It is her way of convincing herself that she is exercising authority. It is the same thing with

prisoners. Ten new solitary confinement cells will be completed in February and Miss Davis says they will be

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Miss Davis. She smacked the haggard prisoners on the humid straw of Blackwell's Island, not to hear 'em howl, but

to convince herself of her rare executive ability. It is not cruelty. It is a psychological case. And it is exactly on all fours with the case of the New York woman tangoing in a gilded barroom, which might be called something else. Miss Davis has authority, but until the sticks—"I should not call them clubs"—are whacking criminal heads she cannot wholly realize it. Whence the whacks. And her less serious sister—her leggy, cigarette smoking, hilly drinking sister of the cellar—dances and chews her corset string in order to convince herself that she's as good as any man.

The one staggerer under the weight of an authority for which she has had no hereditary training. She is the young mother and the baby.

The other, finding the door of the hen coop open, has walked out into formidable and intoxicating liberty. She wants to do something and she wants to do everything. She gulps thrills as though they were worms. She kicks over the water dish, and she twirls and twirls—

It is the kind of sheer desperation that seizes the hunting hen when its head is suddenly cut off.

To the east of New York and the south and the west are women who have been schooled in authority and educated in liberty. But the New York woman



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The average New York man is housebroken. He prefers to sit by his steam radiator—but so long as the women want to dip in the dance houses he leads them to it.

the earth. She is nearer to the gaudy club. Her primitive idea of law is to haul a fatted male through the holster and sweaty indecencies of a public dance hall—and chew the end of a corset string.

THE PERFECT HUSBAND.

"I NEVER meddle with affairs at home," he said.

And he never did.

"I never make suggestions to my wife that will cause her to change her good judgment," he said.

And he never did.

"I always provide my wife with enough money to run the house and meet every expense," he said.

Which he always did.

"I don't believe any man bothers his wife less in domestic affairs than I do," he said.

And well, that's what he thought.

"A good husband will never meddle with the things his wife is supposed to take care of," he said.

And it seems that one won't. But—

Some one who knew him asked his wife what she had to say about this hands off policy of her husband's.

"It is true he never meddles, never suggests, is no bother to me about the house, and keeps me well supplied with money," she replied.

But she made this statement without enthusiasm—as if she were tired. And the worry wrinkles around her eyes and

the worry wrinkles on her forehead accentuated her monotone.

"He is practically a perfect husband, then?" she was asked.

"I suppose the world would view him as such," she sighed. "But it is necessary for him to meddle? He never suggests how the furniture should be placed because, knowing what he likes, I place it properly. And why should he hint what kind of meat and vegetables we shall have for dinner when I know what will appeal to him? He simply doesn't have to bother about anything at home because I do the thinking."

"He takes credit to himself," continued the wife, "because he doesn't suggest or meddle. He doesn't think of the time I have spent in studying his whims. He doesn't think of the way I have to worry to please him. He thinks it is an easy matter for me to have things just as he likes them. He doesn't consider that often I am at my wits' end to know what to get for his meals."

"Don't you suppose that if things went against his scheme of living he would growl? Of course he would. And then maybe he'd come into the kitchen and advise me to do this or that and not to do so or so."

"Sometimes I wish he would bother the least bit. If he did it would take some of the burden of the home away from me and might check the telltale signs of age that are coming on. I might devote to a book or a stroll in the fresh air some of the time I spend in thinking how he likes a thing done so as to avoid his dislikes."

"He poses as a perfect husband so far as interference or non-interference in household affairs is concerned. But I don't think he deserves credit. I wish he would meddle."



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carefully civilized cities like Madrid and Paris and Vienna and London to the smart set hires trained entertainers to do for them, and if it wants to see the Diamond Jims and the Sapphire Cecils it sends a footman for them and has them stand outside the drawing room window. Even a Grand Duke when he goes strolling leaves his royal woman-kind at home.

But at heart he is a good little man. He even has ideals. Sometimes he reads in the magazine pages of his evening newspaper about the Jane Addamses and Mrs. Fankhursts and other stormy heroines of contemporary life; and he asks himself: "Why haven't we got any public women?"—what he means is "women in public life," but New York philosophy is loose. He reads about the splendid things the women are doing to east and west and south and the East. In his foolish way he suggests that the women might clean his streets, as women do in Holland; and when the women knock about the cars for that he thinks of something else. The other day he found it—

Increasing Belief in Superstitions a Menace to Prosperity

AS WE returning to the days of witchcraft, stake burning, stocks, pilory and the ducking stool?

The question is put by William Wade Hinshaw, the American barytone, who discovers in the psychological development of the times tendencies which seem to augur trouble for all superstitious folk and perhaps various exponents of mental science who are eventually likely to be misunderstood, he believes. Without condemning any of the growing beliefs which in recent years have enlisted thousands of inquiring minds the former Chicago professor finds in the sum and substance of modern thinking infallible signs of the increase of superstition. The perils in store, resulting from a measure of misunderstanding on the part of proselytes and from schisms in the more powerful mental science organizations, he believes are at present widely disregarded.

"Since mental telepathy has taken hold upon many individuals and a belief in the power of thought over the minds and actions of other people has actuated societies engaged in an apparently honest, humanitarian work a surprisingly large number of persons have come to the conclusion that we are on the dawn of many revelations in mental science," said Mr. Hinshaw. Certain lectures of undoubted repute and good standing have even arrived to the point of assuring us that the concentrated thought force of a group of people exerts a powerful influence over any subject in response to which theory there are daily meetings in various large cities of the United States of men and women devoted to the task of influencing the minds of a large number of enrolled applicants for this kind of treatment. Health, success in business and one hundred varied benefits are being sought through this method. "Holding thoughts" to aid a member or a friend is the remedy being daily applied in many quarters of the country.

"By the ever increasing number of converts to this practice it appears evident that reliance upon unseen and largely misunderstood influences is becoming more and more common. Without discussing the responsibility of the auspices, we may declare that the effect of this influence is to engender superstition in the minds of thousands of people who at this stage of civilization are unable to accept such doctrines and the spirit in which they are intended. If the average workman becomes obsessed with the idea that a group of persons in a far off room can influence him for the better, it will be difficult to convince him that a similar evil influence can be administered, and if three or four or a dozen persons are together able to control his destinies in a measure, he will be easily persuaded that a single person may by virtue of extraordinary concentrative power and long practice be able to effect the same results.

It may seem a little absurd to assume that our jurisprudence is sufficiently feeble to countenance such practices as tend toward the uprooting of logic and the cultivation of superstition, but in the face of the gross outbursts told in the daily press we cannot

help admitting that such blind atrocities as were perpetrated centuries ago are possible to-day, when mob spirit still strongly survives as a relic of barbarism. New Yorkers were aghast when they heard of those who had been ensnared and deluded by the self-styled Omnipotent One. Recent disclosures have brought testimony that we are living in a very credulous age. Credulity is a hideous weakness when entertained by a large number of persons respecting the same false theory.

"This is only one instance of the departure in modern thinking from the conservative lines drawn by the traditions of our forefathers and the stately philosophies inherited from other civilizations than our own. Every year we witness the formation of some new cult devoted to a so-called mental science. In surveying the propaganda of the best known established organizations of this character we are beset with the realization that there is an earnest desire on the part of an overwhelming number of people to reconcile the scientific and the spiritual. The effort is manifestly humanitarian, although up to date many alleged disciples of the newer faiths have sailed under colors as false as some of their curious dogmas. While recognizing sincere motive and desire for the uplift of humanity, it is, however, not amiss to lift the hand of warning. Interesting thousands of men and women in the ways and means of self-improvement by holding meetings, delivering lectures and giving treatments on the face of it seems praiseworthy, but in the final analysis is this occupation really a healthy one or not? In moderation we are quick to affirm that introspection and spiritual supplication are absolutely necessary to strength of character. Whether or not, however, thought and money spent in this direction are beneficial to man and to society of which he forms a part depends upon original motive, antecedents, knowledge, efficiency and operation. It is for the individual to decide, first, what his own motives are, and then how valuable will be the teachings to which he would harken.

"It is a significant fact that a prodigious army of modern thinkers has ministered in the United States, that traditions have been overturned one after another and the state of mind of the people concerning religion is most chaotic. Never before have the American people faced a graver danger than that which lurks in the teachings of many well meaning leaders, healers and organizers, who, in their efforts to strike the happy combination between science and dogma, go far beyond the mark, make absolute rules from incidental truths and finally become haplessly ensnared in the net of superstition, to which folds are drawn the multitudes of sluggish minds which habitually let others do their reasoning for them.

"There is no question that a surprising number of men and women of refinement and good education and refinement to-day pin their faith to necromancy, astrology, alchemy and many forms of occultism. Men of finance and letters are found in consultation with mediums, palmists and clairvoyants are well patronized and 'healers' are superseding physicians in

many households. We may ask with concern whether we are drifting—to a truer enlightenment or back to the black arts of centuries past? The conservative will reply that discrimination must be brought to bear between the legitimate and the illegitimate, between those cults and practices long ago condemned and the science proven theories of the true modernists. But does this take into consideration the mentality of the average man, his capacity for use or for abuse, and does it safeguard the uninitiated masses that bow to the wisdom and advice of the times as reflected by the more erudite, well to do classes? Obviously it does not. Because there is such divergence of views among the mental scientists of the hour, despite the generous following in certain beliefs, there can be no unity of effort at present directed toward a methodical search into the unseen. The hundreds of counter currents of opinion among the credulous class, who hearken to distorted and vicious counsels of leaders of varied ilk, leave the bulk of this much to be feared tolerance as

a dead weight upon the public intelligence and educational progress.

"It is difficult to imagine the state of affairs more inimical to our prosperity as a nation than one in which fear of the supernatural preys upon the minds of the people. There is an abundance of evidence that such a condition is possible and it lies in the manifest credulity of the masses. The most absurd and illogical propositions do not lack for enthusiastic support; indeed, it has been found practicable to take advantage of this trusting attitude for countless money making schemes.

"It is not only at the doors of those who employ sophistry and chicanery that guard must be placed but also at portals of legitimate, well meaning organizations where notwithstanding the best intentions delusion brings detrimental results. Not only must the faker be suppressed but the honest teacher curbed and the convert made to recognize the law of limitation.

"There is little doubt that the support for these theories that breed superstition comes mainly from well to do persons

Among the leisure classes is the compelling ground of eyes, the adventuring who in return for a little spurious advice and considerable flattery pocket many a dollar. They are wiser than the more honest folk who patronize them. Their careers are usually short, so they work for big harvests, quick returns and, as often, prepare for a speedy 'get-away.' They appear in a score of different shapes and as subtle judges of human nature they win the attention and sympathy of their patrons by various roundabout means. Since money is their object they seldom waste time with those who seem to possess little of the world's goods, but they play for large stakes, telling remarkable stories of their achievements and their influential friends.

"To the same elements from which spring that deadly, unreasoning mob spirit we must turn to cope with erring simplicity and superstition. There is need of a vigorous and unsparring campaign if we are to check the growing tolerance of pseudo-religion and fake healing methods."

watch for the first fall of snow that will afford them the chance of getting out their sleds and indulging in the sport.

A man never grows too old to sleigh ride, and if you seek corroborative proof of this statement visit all on which sleighing is permitted. You are bound to see some young boys and you certainly will notice some old boys. Apparently they are just as spry as the younger boys. They jog up the hills quicker and they coast down them faster. This may be due in a measure to the increased weight on the sleds.

But those fortunate people comprise only a handful, at least when New York is considered. So it is reasonable to assume that a large percentage of New Yorkers are satisfied to do their sledding on the hills and inclines in the city or in the suburbs. Some who have friends or other connections in Ithaca may journey to that lily region of the State to indulge in the sport, for the town that Cornell University made famous is renowned for its facilities for sledding.

Perhaps a decade ago there was more sled-dogging and coasting in New York city than there is nowadays. In looking for a reason for the decline in the sport the first explanation offered is that less snow falls than formerly. Then it is certain that nowadays snow is removed just as fast as men and carts can carry it away. The third and most important reason for the decline of sledding in New York is the enormous increase in traffic.

If New Yorkers of the present time get the opportunity to bobbed two or three times during the season they are satisfied. Furthermore there is a certain element of danger present if sledding is permitted in a public thoroughfare. Automobiles are liable to flash into view at any moment and to crash into a bobbed with the usual result—injury to those on the sled.

Joys of Bobsledding in Upper Part of City

To those who have bobbed at St. Moritz, where princes, counts and princesses go to indulge in winter sports, and perhaps to those who have tobogganed in Quebec on the Chateau toboggan slide that starts under the King's bastion of the citadel and ends just below the Chateau Frontenac on the terrace, this tale may not prove interesting. The fortunate ones who have been at either of these places when the sledding was good have enjoyed the very best that nature and man can provide in that sport.

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