

"WHO POSED FOR THAT HORRID STATUE!"



LADY MARJORIE MANNERS



COUNTESS OF WESTMORELAND



Duchess of Westminster

Three Beauties of the English Court, Each of Whom Denies That She Had Anything to Do with the Statue.



Outline Drawing of the Countess of Gleichen Statue, Showing the "Typical Lines of 1914."

THE most interesting, if not the most artistic, work in the current exhibition of the Royal Academy in London is a statue by the Countess Feodora Gleichen.

It is the most interesting in the sense that it has attracted the attention of more people of all classes than any other work, even if the high-browed critics have sniffed at it.

Why is this statue so interesting? Because it represents an undraped figure of considerable attractiveness. Because it is said to be the composite likeness of three or more prominent noble society women. Because the sculptress is a cousin of Queen Mary. Because Her Majesty has made a terrible fuss about it. There are other reasons, but probably those are enough.

The statue is labelled "The Woman of 1914." That means, of course, that it is the woman of fashionable and aristocratic society, the woman who wears the latest creations and omens in dress.

The Countess Gleichen enjoys spacious apartments in historic St. James's Palace through the royal bounty, and there she has a fine studio. She has been regarded as an amateur sculptress and has practised her art for many years without creating any sensation. Many of the most prominent women in fashionable society, including most of the British duchesses, have been there to pose for her. The royal sculptress has made busts of them conventionally attired, and these have been exhibited to an admiring world with the real names attached.

Now, the general understanding is that some of these noble visitors posed for the undraped statue at the Academy. The popular idea is that the statue represents a composite of the best known and most admired beauties in English society. Some members of the fashionable set assert

Very Entertaining Game of Hide and Seek in the British Aristocracy to Find and Punish the Originals of Countess Gleichen's Undraped 'Society Woman of 1914' Who Carries Only a Vanity Bag

that they can recognize certain striking lines of beauty in the figure as belonging to friends of theirs. At first there were not lacking ladies who boldly claimed that they were the whole thing, in spite of the strong evidence that it was a composite portrait. Their tone has changed, however, since Queen Mary went on the war path.

The Countess Gleichen herself asserted when her work first excited remark that it represented a type, and not a single person. To explain this statement away, one of the unblushing ones who wanted to be the whole thing said:

"Oh, yes, the Countess Feddy tried to make a composite statue of a lot of us, but my figure impressed her so much that she couldn't help making me. Anybody can see that it's my figure."

"The Woman of 1914" is a slender limbed figure standing in a drooping attitude with her right arm akimbo, while from her left hand depends a little vanity bag, her only adornment. Why the vanity bag? Well, that is the most original touch about the whole statue, and at the same time a point against which much hostile criticism has been directed. This vanity bag is said to have annoyed Her Majesty very much.

"No one can defend a statue of a woman wearing only a vanity bag by saying that it is in the same class as the classic statues of the nude." Her Majesty is reported to have said with keen critical insight.

One sly critic has written that this statue aims to represent the ideal towards which woman's costume is tending. Perhaps that was the idea in Her Majesty's mind, too; but, of course, she would not have said such a thing.

"Though the figure," writes another critic, "is that of a girl of twenty, the pose is one of quiet but provocative affront, and the face finely modelled, has an expression anything but virginal. It typifies vividly the twentieth century woman—youthful, pleasure-bored, 'been-there-and-back' young society woman, the quintessence of worldliness steeped in self-admiration."

The figure has the long, loose, slender limbs that are so much admired in England and that are so frequently seen in English women. Owing to the prevailing fashions in bathing suits, golf suits and other sporting costumes, one can observe these things in real life at least as well as in this statue.

The statue undoubtedly gives a good idea of a certain English upper class type of beauty, but it tends towards caricature. The limbs are too slender and delicate for young women who practise sport so vigorously. The head, however, is more lifelike.

Some admirable examples of the tall, slender type of English womanhood are the Duchess of Westminster, the Countess of Westmoreland and Lady Marjorie Manners, who recently became the Marchioness of Anglesey. They are all very original and progressive in their costumes. They have exhibited themselves as "living statues," and in various kinds of spectacles and pageants for the entertainment of a beauty loving public. Queen Mary tried, with indifferent success, to put an end to spectacles of that kind, but whatever kind she frowned upon, the tendency was sure to break out in some new direction.

All the three beauties mentioned have denied that they are in any way represented by the statue. Having been so prominent in all sorts of artistic entertainments, and being friends of the Countess of Gleichen, it was natural that people should

compare them with the curious piece of sculpture.

The head bears a marked resemblance to that of the Viscountess Curzon, a tall, graceful Englishwoman who was chosen Queen of Beauty at a revival of an ancient tournament held recently in London.

The game of guessing who posed for "The Woman of 1914" has become the chief amusement of London society. Never has art been so popular. At dinner parties the favorite subject of conversation is the statue. One gilded youth may be heard declaring that he is sure the Duchess of So-and-So's right leg is represented by the artist, while his fair dinner companion asserts loudly that it is Lady Marjorie's, and "she ought to know, because they were brought up together." There is unlimited frankness about these discussions. It is significant to note that the statue is supposed to represent the woman who is ready to discuss anything.

When the exhibition opened, Queen Mary was too busy with her visit to Paris to notice what was happening. Various works of art had to be put in the cellars of Parisian public buildings and statues draped before the gay capital was fit to be seen by Her Majesty.

Having returned from that visit, the Queen was shocked to learn that her own cousin had been making nudity popular. She threatened to take away the Countess Gleichen's apartments in St. James's Palace, a step which would be difficult to carry out, as they were granted by Queen Victoria.

Queen Mary declared that any woman who posed for the statue would, when discovered, be permanently banished from Court, and excluded from all respectable society. "And I mean to make it my business to discover all of them," said the Queen. "A woman who would do such a thing is undermining the respect the lower classes should feel for the leaders of society, and is helping to bring about a social revolution."

Her Majesty's anger was so serious that every woman under suspicion took pains to prove that she was not in the statue. The Countess Gleichen tried to quiet the storm by saying rather late and unconvincingly that she had used a professional model. The news of all this trouble caused

additional interest in the statue among the general public, art loving and otherwise. Guards were needed to keep the crowd at a respectable distance. Indignation, ridicule and admiration were variously expressed.

The figure does not always excite admiration in the middle classes. A stout grocer, having inspected it, critically remarked:

"Well, if that's a duchess, give me Mrs. Jones!"

Countess Feodora Gleichen, the sculptress, is a poor relation of royalty. Her father was Prince Victor of Hohenlohe-Langenburg, a grandson of Queen Victoria's mother by her first marriage. Prince Victor married an Englishwoman not of royal birth, and his children did not inherit his rank, but were called instead Counts and Countesses Gleichen. Queen Mary's own ancestry is somewhat similar, as she is descended on her father's side from the marriage of a royal prince with a plebeian woman.

And still Queen Mary declares with fire in her eye and an ominous shaking of the royal plume and draperies that she will find and punish the culprits who posed in the "altogether!"

The Much Discussed Status of the "Society Woman of 1914," for Which One or Several English Beauties Posed. "Perfectly Outrageous," Cries Queen Mary, Trying Her Best to Keep the Court from Looking at It—While at Least a Half-Score of Her Beauties Try not to Look Self-Conscious—and the "Liberals" Say: "Honi soit qui mal y pense!"



HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE

How Mankind Has Danced Itself Into World Control and High Civilization

INSTEAD of being the frivolous pastime it is regarded in some quarters, dancing has been one of the most important factors in the development of the human race, according to Dr. Louis Robinson, a well-known anthropologist.

The influence of dancing extends far back into prehistoric times, and has constantly made itself felt right down to these tango-mad days.

In prehistoric time it was the dancing savage who survived. To-day the dance contributes to a considerable extent to honest matrimonial dealing. That, in brief, is the conclusion Dr. Robinson arrives at after his research into the subject, and the evidence he advances in support of his contention is by no means unconvincing.

It is pointed out in the first place that practically every savage people spends a large part of its time in dancing. But savages are essentially lazy. They exert themselves only when necessary to procure food and save their skins from their enemies. They much prefer to lead the simple life. When food is plentiful, enemies scarce, and the elements friendly they are very apt to eat to repletion, and then spend the time between meals in philosophical reflection.

The effect of this easy life on a tribe of savages can well be imagined. Their muscles become soft and their intelligence dulled. They fall an easy prey to hostile tribes to whom fortune has been less kind in the matter of sustenance, and who have had to live by the chase. The more energetic tribe had to do some-

thing to maintain its fitness, and, according to Dr. Robinson, it resorted to dancing.

In discussing this phase of the matter he presents an imaginative picture of life in prehistoric days.

Tribe A enters into a temporary partnership with Tribe B for a mammoth hunt. They succeed in forcing one of the clumsy creatures over a precipice, and then fall upon his crushed carcass with their flint knives. The meat is soon ready for the eager savages.

Tribe A consists of dancing men, whose practice it is to dance before, during and after a feast of this kind. Tribe B, on the other hand, is of the lazy, gormandizing type. They gorge themselves on the mammoth flesh and lie around until they are in a condition again to eat.

This state of things goes on for perhaps two weeks, when a ravenous band of warriors, comprising Tribe C, is attracted by the smell of the mammoth carcass. What happens? Tribe A, lithe and active as a result of their dancing, are fully able to meet an equal number of Tribe C if it comes to a fight, or, at any rate, they are able to negotiate a safe retreat. In either event, large numbers of them survive the attack. But as for Tribe B, flabby and gorged, their survival is out of the question.

In this way, Dr. Robinson believes, dancing played an important part in the survival of the fittest of our earliest ancestors. The fact that even to-day dancing and feasting go hand in hand is merely a reversion to type.

Dancing played a prominent part, too, in the mental and moral development of man. Primitive man was a coward. The more intelligent he became, the more he feared danger.

"Here apparently," says Dr. Robinson, "was a grave bar to progress along the best and most promising lines, which were those of the mind rather than the body; for it would be the brainy savage who would be most oppressed and unnerved by awful possibilities when entering any danger zone. Yet war was a dread and almost daily necessity if he would escape extinction; and it would seem as if the cowardliness of the more intelligent and farseeing would check human progress by giving the more stupid and brutal tribes the upper hand."

"It seems to me probable that here the spirit of dancing stepped in, and, by turning the sensibilities and imaginations of the best men to good account, saved the situation. We know that under the influence of passion many timid creatures and men become utterly fearless. There are few more gallant warriors than the deer in the mating season, and the same is true of sheep and other animals which have become to us personifications of timidity. Doubtless with our early forefathers it was the same. . . . Before the onset they worked themselves up into a factitious rage, or, at any rate, into that exalted emotional state that we call a fighting mood, by war dances, which often took the shape of prancing around or behind some stimulating emblem to the sound of some ruba-dub music."

Equally interesting are the doctor's theories regarding the part played by dancing in our own time, although nowadays it is not so much the dancing itself as the dancing attire which is making its influence felt on the race.

"There have been discussions," Dr. Robinson said, "to to why clothes were first worn—whether for ornament, warmth or decency—but I think one can say without any doubt whatever that, from the first ages until now, dance clothing has been mainly decorative. Here we find an ethical and eugenic, if not an ethical, justification of matters connected with dancing dress—or undress—which has often provoked severe criticism among very civilized people. Unhappily many social customs claiming solidarity with the worthiest aspects of our latter-day life have contributed to matrimonial fraud, comparable to the covering of rubbishy fruit with an inviting layer of 'toppers,' or even to the tendering of base coin. Without a doubt from the earliest times until now the dance has been a chief purifying agent in the marriage market—has played the part, in fact, of those market inspectors appointed to guard against adulteration."

"Little as is known of the past of the 'Pilldown Lady'—who may be said now to have won a sound social status with the honorable surname of Dawson—we may say with full confidence that before her early marriage she danced, and that she dressed for dancing. That earth-stained human fragment over which some of our anthropologists are wrangling in learned polysyllables once bobbed around."