

## Our Betters

most of us when we are young—I mean those who think and feel—are by nature rebels. It is only in middle life that we learn to toe the line of expediency, the line of least resistance. We fall into step with those whom we call Our Betters—those who are in power. We are creatures of habit in mind as well as in body; and when we are old (some are born old) we cast aside the unworldly wisdom which our ethical instinct taught us, and put on the worldly wisdom of vested interests. We no longer think and feel for ourselves—we cease to be individuals, we are swallowed up in and become part of a system; we adopt the machine-made social laws of Our Betters. It is to our advantage. We are on the make. "Take what you can—give what you must" is the motto of the utilitarian.

This worldly wisdom is forced upon us in many ways: by the pinch of poverty, by the greater ease with which it enables us to climb the greasy pole of fame, by the avoidance of friction in our relations with our fellow men, and by that sympathetic and unconscious absorption of the prevailing ideas that surround us—the cult of Good Form. We are creatures of habit inwardly and outwardly.

On that symbol of respectability, the frock coat, we wear two buttons at the back, though why few of us know. A reverence for buttons