

The Woman's Point of View

Annotations of Annabel

DEAREST:

In Mr. C. K. Munro's comedy, "At Mrs. Beam's," lately presented for its elect by the Wellington Repertory Theatre Society, the denizens of the ubiquitous boarding-house live and move before us. With a reminiscent shudder one listened to the verbal spate that poured from the lips of the voluble Miss Shoe—played with extreme realism by Mrs. Coleridge, who entirely shed her own identity in that of the exhausting spinster—and pondered why it is that the same kind of people congregate in the same kind of place.

THE merit of Mr. Munro's plays lies in that factor. Not dramatic or melodramatic, except here and there, the presentation of faulty humanity in some of its least attractive phases is well and wittily accomplished. In the recent presentation, Mr. Morris Dunkley, as the drab and droning failure, pottering in and out, trying to tell his silly story and talked down by everyone, was competent and convincing. He always is. Never have I seen this versatile member of the Society in a part where he failed to achieve credibility.

EACH to his taste, and some of us liked best the portrayal of Mr. Ian MacEwan of a crook who, for reasons that might be clearer, is "wanted" by the police of three continents, and stalked and suspected by Mrs. Beam's boarders, albeit they find him too fascinating for words. Mr. MacEwan's stage appearance is entirely in his favour, he moved and acted with considerable distinction, always occupying a right place in the picture, and speaking his lines with attractive enunciation and a sufficient modicum of cynicism. To him and to Mrs. Coleridge much kudos is to be accorded; the latter, as already suggested, giving notable performance of a difficult role, upon which hangs much of the success of the comedy.

MISS Marjorie Statham had a difficult and dramatic row to hoe, and remarkable success was achieved. So outstanding were conception and interpretation that it is safe to predict a distinguished future if a histrionic career is embraced. Artistically made up, garbed with vivid picturesqueness enhancing dark and intriguing beauty, entirely graceful in swift and sudden gesture, Miss Statham used her delightful voice and obvious facility to striking purpose. So good was her performance that one expects her to do much better, and of a surety the wider world some day will applaud her talent.

MISS Butts looked and acted as we would expect Mrs. Beam to do, wearing blackly beaded silk of ancient cut, its ample folds traditional as the aspidistra and glass case of flowers on the mantelpiece, Mr. James was sufficiently unpleasant as an unbelievably rude adolescent, Mr. Jasper Baldwin absolutely unconvincing as Colin; while Mrs. Patrick Marshall used Irish brogue with commendable audibility and aplomb, the while she wore an enviable coat, a "mixed grill" of brocade and glittering silver, stoled with ermine and posied in scarlet, eminently dignified and becoming.

THE Masonic Hall was crowded with the world of the intelligent-sia, accompanied by his wife; and the progress of the comedy was followed with a receptive attention that gave fresh indication of the notable revival of interest in plays and players that is so marked a sign and token of latter post-war years. This is all to the good, and if Mr. Edgar Wallace does get rather too large a share of the theatrical "loot," 'tis because he appeals to the masses, who by force of numbers hold within their dispensation the loaves and fishes of temporary success.

GOOD taste or bad, 'tis all a matter of opinion. Some there be who

prefer the execrable jazz; others despise Wagnerian magnificence, find Stravinsky adorable, and abjure all but the modern. Many a friendship is like to split upon relative merit of Mr. Galsworthy, Clemence Dane, or some raucous exploiter of the crook. Evadne, that charming flapper, collects unto herself literature pertaining to things Chinese, her library ranging from lore esoteric and Buddhist to the attractive tales of mixed marriage by Louise Jordan Miln. For those who wander in the outer darkness of literary doubt, I commend the following jingle of a famous raconteur:—

There's Conrad and Kipling, James Stephens and Moore,

Hudson and Masefield are names to conjure;

Sheila Kaye-Smith and the great R.L.S., And last, but not least, the author of "Tess."

James Barrie and Chesterton—minus the joke—

With Huxley and Machen together we'll yoke;

Plus William McFee, with his tales of the sea,

Complete with the verse of Yeats—W.B. Your

ANNABEL LEE.

Every day is born into the world, comes like a burst of music, and rings itself all the day through; and thou shalt make of it a dance, a dirge, or a life march as thou wilt."—Carlyle.

For Sandwiches

Cheese Butter.

THIS is very tasty spread on cream crackers. Put into a double saucepan 2oz. of butter, 4oz. grated cheese, and half a teacupful of milk. Season well with salt and pepper and a little made mustard. Stir over low gas till well mixed and the cheese dissolved, then turn into pots; it will keep in a cool place several days.

Tomato Cream.

THIS is much easier than slicing fresh tomatoes, and just as welcome. Scald ½lb. of tomatoes, peel them and put in a pan with 1oz. of butter. Stew gently for ten minutes, then add a slice of crumbled white bread, a beaten egg, and seasoning to taste. Cook for a few minutes, then pot; when cool, pour a little melted butter over the top.

Salmon Paste.

FAR superior in flavour to the ordinary bought kind. Remove the skin and bone from half a small tin of salmon. Pound until smooth, then add 1oz. of butter, and a slice of finely crumbled bread; add salt, pepper, and a little vinegar; put into glass jars and cover with melted butter. M.F.

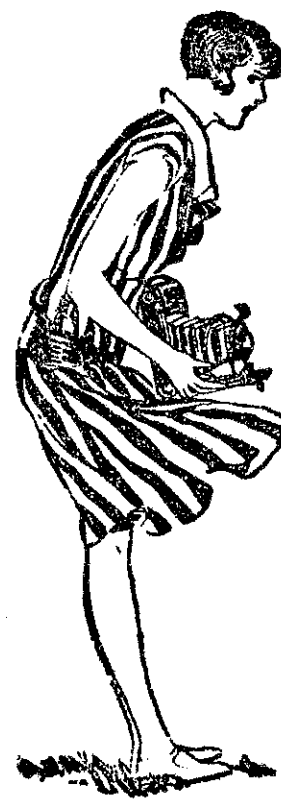
Hints that Help

Repairing the Carpet Sweeper.

DO not throw aside the carpet sweeper because the wheels are worn. Bind the wheels with adhesive plaster to the former thickness, and the sweeper will run smoothly again.

Longer Life for Wash Leathers.

WASH leathers go into holes when kept hanging up. They get dry, and when stretched naturally tear. I now have mine kept in a jar of water under the sink. This trebles its life and it is always ready for use.



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