

Annotations of Annabel

DEAREST:

The year's at the spring, the days—assisted by Mr. Sidey, as amateur Olympian—grow longer, and the frocks shorter or so it seems to the casual loungeur on the Quay, as he surveys the dimpled knees so lavishly displayed in and out of season in this year of our Lord, when the shy modesty, maybe the prurience, of times that are past is thrown to the winds.

DRESS shows continue to amaze by variety of gleam and glitter, frill and fluttering modishness. Attractive are Celanese sets of intimate garments, comprising princess petticoat corset and "combs," Titania-ish in texture, and complete with suspender and brassiere which are the inward and indispensable panoply of outward and bodily grace. Colours in this sequence of perfection pass from pastel-pale to Cimmerian hue, the latter appealing to her who loves to strike a bizarre and differing note. By the way, what a fascinating "night" (in Cuba Street parlance) was that sported by Gloria Swanson in her role of a stranded San Francisco trollop in the extremely able film dramatisation of Somerset Maugham's "Rain."

LATEST and greatest of mannikin shows, in and out of fiction, is that in "The Strange Vanguard," organised for an impertinent young female who, by nimble wit and gift of the gab, so captivated a millionaire that he amiably ordered a dress show on his yacht of dreams, ex-

quisite creations being paraded and purchased for the adventurous tripper. And incredibly, for so showering this sartorial manna, the eccentric philanthropist asked nothing in return. Not even civility! Of such stuff as dreams are made, indeed, when in the way of virtuous femininity come such chances!

BEAUTY seldom comes into its own in these days when the ugliness of chic is our choice, unclassic draperies, the Eton crop; although there are indications on the far horizon of a return to a more picturesque, if less untrammelled mode. Fresh fillip has been given in England to the cult of beauty by discovery of a very lovely model indeed. Limned as mannequin by the attractive art of Lewis Baumer, she is a miracle of grace; in conventional evening dress poised and beautiful; and in some misty vignettes her carriage of head and profile of perfection find delightful portrayal by well-known painters of the day.

IN an audience that recently listened to a disquisition on psychology was your Annabel, led thither by a friend insistent upon the education of the soul. Imposingly clad in green and sparkling gown, with piled and snow-white coiffure, enormously pink-posied and cloaked in geranium-red, the lady lecturer took the eye as well as the platform, while benevolently she dilated on the Way of Success to us who sat at her feet, closely clasping leaflets of printed tributes to the gifts and graces of

the smiling exponent of the sovereignty of the spirit.

A PLEASANT avocation and a profitable, one surmises, thus to sit in the seat of the mighty and assure one's dear fellow-creatures of what, if they have any sense, they know perfectly well already; the efficacy of right thought, wise direction of the spark of divinity imprisoned in the body, and the undoubted importance of that solar plexus which is the metaphorical power behind the throne.

UPON my incredulous mind, I admit, the lecture, delivered in a voice not quite adapted to the difficult art of the orator, had a soporific effect. Much of the discourse consisted of allusions to the Christian doctrine in its relation to psychology, well watered down and offered as something fresh for the spirit to browse upon and find sustenance in the Pursuit of Perfection. Surely it argues extreme superficiality of reasoning, or desperate need of reassurance, when a few obvious conclusions and collated clichés are eagerly accepted as hope and healing for body and mind.

REFLECTION on the Way to Win brings me to Pamela Frankau, that glad girl, daughter of the novelist, who makes naive remarks in a recent publication. Satisfying possible itch for the limelight, she exploits the ego in modern manner, and with Nietzschean revelations of the Will to Get the Best of It, dilates one calculating eye to the Main

Chance, the Best Time, the Better 'Ole. "To go" is the creed, it is clear, of the gospel according to post-war youth. Never be weary, never be sad, always be on the social map, and never, never fall into the clutches of the futile, the vacuous, or the dud. In which latter ambition I concur, though not so expert as my juniors as a dodger of the dull. Midway in the vivacious chronicle lurks a grain of sentiment for the swain of the moment, serving further to illuminate the chasm 'twixt Now and Then—when at emotional moments, Victorian eighteen-year-old thrilled to something like this—

*"Great in the sea and heaven,
Yet greater is my heart;
And fairer than sea or heaven
Flashes and beams my love."*

That's the stuff they gave the girls in the nineties!

Your
ANNABEL LEE.

Books

THE STRANGE VANGUARD. (Arnold Bennett.)

MR. ARNOLD BENNETT is at the height of his gay imagination in his latest tale of a tub—the tub in this case being represented by the palatial yacht of Lord Furber, Midlander and millionaire. To this floating palace, which radiates a golden glitter reminiscent of the Arabian Nights, is kidnapped with ease and dexterity a travelling financier with whom it is desired to make a business deal. Accidentally, also, included in the kidnap is vivacious and attractive Harriet Perkins, who without haste or pause proceeds to make hay of the hearts of those susceptible males who hover within her necessarily restricted orbit.

Lord Furber seeks solace from discordant domesticity in the Mediterranean by means of an organised and entertaining cruise, which is laden with potentialities that gradually become

apparent. Descendant of many Five Towns protagonists, created for our delight by Mr. Bennett's ardent fancy, he is possessed in full measure of their audacious chicanery, their brag and their bounce, allied with an engagingly simple love of the limelight and ostentatious display of newly-acquired wealth. Equally true to the Towns is Maidie, his wife, with whom periodically, in the Tennysonian tradition, he falls out, he knows not how, and kisses again with tears.

Through all the merry saga is an atmosphere of gay bumptiousness and vulgar luxuriance of detail. 'Tis all droll and diverting, and very, very Bennett-ish. Amusing are his puppets, though such as never walked in flesh and blood; and there are shrewd notes of observation concerning the social comedy, occasional penetrating analyses of the motives of men, and now and again an illuminating sentence like this: "He felt both happy and wicked; a sensation than which there is perhaps no finer in human life." In which opinion he will have many adherents.—R. U. R.

IT appears that the B.B.C. is now taking an active part in the reformation of criminals. At Wormwood Scrubs it is stated there is a class of sixty prisoners who systematically follow the educational talks from Savoy Hill.

Click! went the Kodak



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some day say. Oh, but she will have.
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