

## Fashion Notes and Notions.

By PENELOPE.

### PENELOPE'S FANCIES IN DURBAN.

#### The Town Itself.

Durban has certainly been disappointing from a weather point of view this season, at least during the short period of my visit it has been blowy and cloudy and all the pretty summer clothes that one had hoped to wear have been stowed away in boxes. The more I see of Durban, however, the more I like it. It always appears to me to be one of the best run towns in the Union, wide streets well regulated as to traffic, plenty of amusement, in the matter of the arts, such as a perfectly delightful orchestra, an art gallery, good bioscopes, and, nearly finished, the palatial new picture house. I like too the wide verandah of the Royal Hotel, so continental looking with smart crowds dancing at tea time, and lots of nice motor cars parked in the vicinity of the Town Hall. I do not like the War Memorial, which looks like a Bulgarian atrocity in majolica, (this, of course, is merely a matter of taste, and my taste may be utterly different from yours). The Marine Hotel, too, on Saturday nights, when the guests, their friends, and all the leading society folk of Durban dance in the Italian Garden is as delightful for dancing, setting, music, by Vos's Band, as anything to be found anywhere in the world. These weekly dances are wonderfully organised, numbers dining and dancing run from 400 to 800 and people find it an easy and delightful way of entertaining their friends. This season the dances have been regularly patronised by parties from Government House, who generally dine late and who all appear to be very keen and good dancers.

#### Art and Artists.

Following my remarks about the Annual Exhibition of the Natal Societies of Artists, I have had an interesting interview with the President, Mr. Leo Francois, a remarkable man in many ways, full of enthusiasm, I had nearly said and of education, because it is so rarely one has the leisure to sit down to a conversation with any one for long enough to know whether they know anything or only guess. I was profoundly impressed by the depth of Mr. Francois' knowledge on art and artists, music and musicians and literature and writers. He appears to have dabbled in most branches of artistic expression and thinks the salvation of the world lies in the development of the love of the beautiful and the artistic in our youth. He advocates the training of our school children to enable them to appreciate art, for he thinks that our spare time is best occupied in the pursuit of such joys. Art, he says, fills the spaces of our life. He seems to be an advocate of the modernists, the expressionists' aim is to re-create the soul.

#### Miss Sonnenberg's Success.

Jenny Sonnenberg has had a most appreciative reception from Durban audiences. I heard her in the Town Hall on the occasion of her first appearance and am going to confess that I like her much better than I did the first time I heard her. I do think

and say it at the risk of being considered uncultured, that these little spasmodic bursts of melody that are so typical of the modernist expression of song, impose limits to the immediate appeal to an ordinary audience. I mean to say that it is difficult for anyone who is not hearing this type of music all the time to take in the meaning of the melody (if any), and the personality of the singer at the first hearing. In all humility, I think, to put it bluntly, they do not give scope to the voice. In Durban, Jenny Sonnenberg was heard in Aria, "Che Faro" (Gluck), in Handel's "Ombra mai Fui" and Henschel's "Morning Hymn." A suite of song by Richard Strauss was rendered with exquisite timbre and finish. The whole performance was delightful. Jenny Sonnenberg's appearance, her quiet and unassuming grace, and her beautifully full-toned voice are all that the most critical could desire and I hope to hear her again and again. I understand that her next concert in Johannesburg is to be on August 4th and in Pretoria, August 7th.

#### Another Jewish Vocalist.

Quite by chance I met another charming South African singer, also one of our people, and a daughter of the well-known Durban merchant, Mr. Harry Linder. She was the singer at the Pavilion at the concert of the Municipal Orchestra, and as I left Durban before that event I was given the opportunity to hear her practise to the accompaniment of Miss Hilda Liman, a most accomplished pianist. Miss Linder has a beautiful lyric soprano voice. She is only nineteen years old and her voice production and control are remarkable in one so young. She is an exceptionally pretty girl and is full of temperament, and I shall be surprised if she does not make a great appeal and attain immediate success. Miss Linder used to be an infant prodigy and was heard at concerts in Durban when only nine years of age when she was a pupil of Grogan Caney. Later she went to England where she studied for four and a half years under the late Arthur Thompson at the Royal Academy, she has taken her L.R.A.M. in both pianoforte and singing, and after the death of Thompson she took lessons from Victor Beigel.

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