

# The Ultra-Modern Girl

Continued from page 44

- (g) Speed;
- (h) Late hours.

This list is incomplete, but it will serve sufficiently for the present purpose.

Two days ago one of the nicest girls I know told me, quite seriously, that she liked drinking a little more than was good for her occasionally, and that she thought there was nothing wrong in it. It rather amused her that I should disagree, and—since the year was 1926 and not 1913—I discussed the matter with her without betraying any mor-

ill health (with its glorification of temporary substitutes), and a general lowering of our spiritual standards.

Then who is responsible for this new conception of the feminine attitude—the girls themselves, or the men?

The common practice of those who blame is to blame the girls. Well, they must take their share. But the greatest blame, when an individual commits an offence, lies sometimes with some other individual who has urged or goaded or tempted him into committing the offence; and we may be quite sure that the modern girl of to-day would not act as she does if the majority of modern men did not want her to.



"Always merry and bright"  
[Snapshot Competition]

THE way, spiritually, is a long way from being over. Man still suffers from the aftermath, requiring excitement rather than peace, and action rather than thought. He gravitates towards the girl who can best accompany him in his prevailing moods, and the girl, though she, too, is caught up in the confusingly swift current of the age, is afraid to swim out of that current into the backwater. She fears that, in the backwater, she will be overlooked. She thinks she must court to the sound of the jazz band.

I have seen more than one girl initiated into the ironical joys of cocktails because of a man's urging, and she has feared to displease him. Perhaps the men do not deserve more than fifty per cent. of the responsibility; but, certainly, they deserve that much.

But all girls—and all men—do not hurl themselves without thought into the vortex of excitement. Between the prehistoric Victorian girl and the ultra-modern girl there is a girl of sound sense and limb who exists, happily, in comfortably large numbers. One may not hear so much about her, but she is here, among us. And she is the girl most likely, I think, to carry on the world's story—and with whom the world's story will be in the safest keeping.

### Acknowledgment

"A Man Under Authority"

THE ability of Ethel M. Dell to write an ingenious and interest-compelling novel has placed her in the front rank of women novelists ad amongst the writer of "best sellers." In her latest book, *A Man Under Authority* (Cassell and Co., per Messrs. A. J. Harding Ltd., Auckland), the character drawing is strong and convincing. The hero is a young vicar who falls in love with an attractive young widow, but also possessed of "a past." There are many pleasant passages and good humour running through the novel, which is altogether most entertaining reading and ends in quite an unexpected way.

al indignation. We were quite calm and academic, as though we were merely discussing a point of grammar or the best way to make an omelette.

IN the Marylebone Road the other day I saw a girl stop, open her bag, consult a mirror, discover that her nose was slightly shiny, and apply the remedy. Meanwhile, a taxi-driver, voicing his views but not acting upon them, made a big curve round her and refrained from running her over.

You think I am inventing? Journalists have been known to do such things. The incident, however, is quite true.

"Damn" is the mildest expletive of more than one girl of my acquaintance. (They are jolly nice girls.) Recently I appeared at the breakfast-table after a small girl who was beginning her egg. She solemnly finished her egg, took a drink of tea, and then remarked, "Hullo!" (She is a jolly nice little girl.) My last tennis partner, in apologising for a bad stroke, admitted that she had been up till three-thirty a.m. (A perfectly nice tennis partner.) And so on, *ad infinitum*.

Now all these things may be right, and I may be wrong in thinking them wrong; yet I do believe they are working against rather than for the general welfare, and that they are tending to induce neuroticism.

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