

Last Year's Debutante

By W. E. Hill

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People who are not in the know wonder, quite naturally, what becomes of the current debs after the season of intensive blooming is over. Do they stay out, or go in again, or what? The answer to this depends on the individual girl. Some girls, for instance, keep coming out more and more, like this lovely girl, Miss Elspeth Brophy, who came out last year with a big boom. Even the most exclusive hostesses are afraid to leave Elspeth's name off the lists, because they can always count on Elspeth's bringing the entire freshman class of some college or other, thereby insuring plenty of extra men.



Most debs, even the most selfish ones, emerge from their first season out in society spiritually ennobled and more thoughtful of the masses. This is why so many girls fight to join the Junior league and offer their services as dress mannequins in the league's annual fashion show for charity. (Here, if you please, are none others than Miss Patty Oglethorpe and Miss Delight Fengelman, parading up and down the small ballroom of the Hotel Clancy, in the very latest hints from Paris.)



You hear very little about some debs, after their first season out, simply because their mothers are the kind who won't stand aside and play second fiddle. You'd be surprised how many girls sit at home nursing bruised hearts because a mother whispered, "Let's go some place and dance!" to a boy friend who rightfully belonged to daughter.



Interior decorators love to engage ex-debs who are looking for jobs. The idea being that with Helen's social connections she will bring just oodles of clients into the office. It takes about a month and a half for the firm to realize that none of Helen's friends want their interiors redecorated.



One season out in society is enough for some debs, and very often just the contact with the social world is enough to stimulate them to the study of some worthwhile subject, such as the making of rush baskets, batik drapes, or bookbinding. So a year later it is no uncommon sight to glimpse a girl who used to be a social butterfly hurrying eagerly to her bookbinding, or basket weaving, just as though she'd never heard of the social register.



Of course there are the ex-debs who get engaged after the social season wanes. Almost before the immediate family is apprised of the glad tidings a few of the more refined news photographers are up at the house taking poses of the young lady, all fixed up to look like a home girl, reading a big book with a few flowers beside her and a sweet, far-away look in her eye.



Little theater movements are a haven for many ex-debs who pine for self-expression and don't seem to take to matrimony. This is little Betty Batty, a debutante of last season, who, as "Mrs. Dudgeon" in an amateur production of "The Devil's Disciple," is declaiming nobly, "My dying curse on you!"



The great majority of debs of a year or so ago go right back to their piano or voice culture, and, later on, if they bear down hard enough on the immediate family, get a year or two in Paris or Milan. (Meet Miss Dorothy Growth, last year's debutante daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Klaus Growth, at the close of a voice lesson with Mme. Amy Thule Finnegan. Mme. Amy is telling Dorothy she musn't dream of leaving her and studying abroad for at least five years, because her head tones and her throat placing aren't ready for big roles yet, and Dorothy must remember that Lilli Lehmann was eighty before her teacher let her sing a single note in public. Dorothy thinks it's the bunk.)