

DEBUTANTES AT THE ROYAL COURTS

Eustella Burke writes from London:

AT THE present moment, the Lord Chamberlain is regarded as the master of many fates. Having announced that the King and Queen would hold five Courts this season, applications for presentation poured in. Canadian debutantes will be presented at the second and fifth Courts, on May 15 and early in July. Meanwhile, until acceptance cards are received, there is little that is definite being said on the subject. Every Canadian debutante longs for a look at the Queen. Meanwhile London dressmakers are working day and night on Court gowns while the optimistic debs and mothers of debs are going ahead with their preparations.

Norman Hartnell, Isobel, and Ulick, the noteworthy dressmaking trio here, brought out their loveliest things for me to see. Last year it appears that Her Majesty the Queen, was greatly pleased with a mother and daughter ensemble. The daughter's train was made of the material used in the mother's gown. Both were green, one light and frothy—the mother's a deeper shade and of a material suitable to the dignity of her years. It is said that the wearers were complimented later by the Queen. The idea and gowns were by Norman Hartnell.

Quite as clever as his ideas and gowns are the names. In the mother and daughter Court ensembles, I was presented to *Sally*, the deb, and *Sally Forth*, her mother. Sally was blush tulle with a panel of blush velvet from mother's gown centred in her train. Another pair were *Dear Daughter* and *Dear Duchess*, the daughter in lighter color and material—this time white with yellow, the mother in satin, the daughter in tulle. *Forget-me-not* was reminiscent of the Baxter print of Queen Victoria when she was eighteen years of age. The headdress which he designed for the gown is quite like the one in which Queen Victoria was pictured by Baxter.

One gorgeous bit of color costing hundreds of guineas was frankly entitled *Blue Ruin*. A backless model had been titled *Getting Your Own Back*. Imagine wearing gowns known to the world of fashion as *Alimony*, *Matrimony* and *Hush Money*.

Isobel's London Shop, with silver hardware, ebony woodwork and black rugs, is a perfect background for the gowns which she is designing for the Courts. Believing that only the most sumptuous things should be worn on these occasions, she has designed hers of glittering sequins, feather-weight lamé and satins that glow and have rich shadows where folds and ripples are deep, brocades that take up the light. Where there is lace, it is always embroidered. Many of her gowns have exquisite net trains with panels in the centre of the material of the gown. Isobel favors a soft pink for the debs. Last season was a blue one, and pink makes a happy change. Many of her youthful gowns have berthas that follow the deep décolletage.

As for Ulick, who is a favorite of many Canadians, thirty yards of chiffon in his hands becomes a dream of a gown. There is something so utterly and subtly youthful about chiffon. In his hands, it is worked into a romance. He favors white and ivory in rich satins and also the lamés.

We were interested in seeing the models of some marvellous sports clothes designed for Mrs. Alex T. Paterson, Mr. Percy P. Cowan's daughter, of Montreal. There was a coarse mottled blue and white tweed outfit with a long coat and a short jacket. There was a short-sleeved white sweater and a long-sleeved blue one.

Another costume was a warm red suit, with one of Ulick's men's shirting linings. The red material had a faint black line and the lining repeated the weave of the cloth.



Court gown in powder blue net, embroidered with silver: a creation of Isobel, London