

Beautiful and Interesting Costumes to Be Worn by Mrs. Fiske

A GORGEOUS gown of cloth-of-gold is one of the costumes Mrs. Fiske wears in the character of Mary of Magdala in Paul Heyse's Biblical drama of that name. It is in the second act of "Mary of Magdala" that Mrs. Fiske appears in the gown of cloth-of-gold. The Magdalen, the woman who possesses such power, that even the high priest of Jerusalem seeks her aid, is in her glory, though her impassive face cloaks a weariness of her life and sin. She comes to the house of a young Roman, Pilate's nephew, that she may see in the garden adjoining his the new prophet, the Nazarene, whom some call the King of the Jews. As she enters and the white sun of Palestine is reflected in the lustre of her gown, she is dazzling in her magnificence, with a splendor that is truly Oriental.

The costume is all golden excepting in front, where folds of the outer robe reveal the underskirt of red silk. The gown itself is of heaviest cloth-of-gold, whose conventional pattern is outlined with a profusion of rhinestones. In the back the gown falls in straight folds, while in front it fits the figure to the waist. The sleeves are short with long undersleeves of gold satin. On the Magdalen's head is a crown of gold, studded with large and small turquoise. Over her ears are clusters of the same gems, from which hang on either side three long pendants. But these, like the face, are hidden at first by two veils of gold lace. The first of these, that falls almost to the waist, is removed soon after the entrance, when the second and shorter veil is folded back from the apex of the crown.

The harmony of this gown with the scene with which it is worn is absolute. It fits not only the glory of the Magdalen, but also her abasement under the spell of the Nazarene's eyes, and her terror, as his followers pursue her and

would stone her, did not a repetition of the Master's words stay them. The very robe that has made her splendid seems pitifully worldly as the woman crouches in fear, the recollection of the prophet's gaze still vividly before her.

That the moral value of colors has been studied in preparing Mrs. Fiske's costumes is evident as soon as the play begins, for nothing would more properly typify the Magdalen than the gown of red brocade silk in which she first appears. The red is of a dark purplish shade, and the floral pattern is outlined in gold thread and studded with rubies. There is a long train to the dress and at the waist is a girdle of gold. The gown is décolleté square, with shoulder straps and breast plate of gold and rubies. Another gown is worn here, while a loose sleeved transparent cape of red silk crepe edged with gold lace is thrown over the shoulders. The effect is rich, but never glaring or brilliant.

In the later acts of the play the sinner has become the penitent. Admirably expressive of the Magdalen's emotions are the gowns of the last two acts. There simplicity contrasts sharply with the contrast of the splendor of the earlier dresses. In the fourth act, where occur the most powerful scenes of the play, Mrs. Fiske wears a simple gown of light brown silk crepe of the softest texture. Yards of this material are used in the full skirt and in the loose flowing sleeves, and in the climax of the act, where Mrs. Fiske stands with the light of an open doorway upon her, the shadow effects made by the graceful gown aid in forming a picture beautiful, spiritual, almost unreal.

Thus, in the color scheme, the progress of the Magdalen's regeneration is noted. It finds its end in the last act, that leaves Mary exalted in her perfect faith. Here she is gowned in spotless white, crepe again being the material, and simplicity the gown's marked feature.