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FASHION

NEW YORK, March 1.—For several weeks past two of the Broadway theatres have been presenting plays in which costumes—supposedly thoroughly up-to-date gowns—have been playing the leading roles. "Frocks and Frills," at Daly's, and "Lady Margaret," at the Bijou, both adaptations from the French comedy, "Les Doigts de Fee," are elaborate studies in the possibilities of feminine fashions. Aside from these sartorial features, the productions are of little value, yet crowded houses have been the rule, indicating that robes a la mode possess a drawing power quite as effective as brilliant stagecraft. As a matter of fact, however, the gowns have been much overrated. With a few exceptions, they are neither novel nor striking.

Miss Bingham's company, in "Lady Margaret," have, I think, rather the better of the battle of garb. The one really artistic confection which Miss Bingham shows is a Paquin costume of gray, that she wears in the second act, and that suits her admirably. The skirt, of gray chiffon over lustrous gray silk, is fitted tightly to the knee, where a full flare is outlined by Spanish lace insertion, sparsely spangled with tiny paillettes. At the middle top of the flare there is an odd ornamentation in the form of a double bow knot made of ropes of chiffon on cord, each end finishing in a silk tassel. The bodice, entirely of Spanish lace and paillettes, has a short skirt over the hips, and a front girdle of satin. The lace is fastened in front, at the top, with four large Rhinestone buttons, from which fall cords and tassels. These also finish the back of the bodice at the waist line. The sleeves have the long top cap of lace, with a fullness of chiffon beneath, caught into the long lace cuff. I have rarely seen anything so beautifully fitted as is this entire frock, and particularly the skirt, another novel feature of which was a strip of lace extending the length of the back from the waist to the end of the train. The hat has the general effect of being made of folds of the most delicate shades of green tulle, trimmed over the top with white roses and deep green leaves. It turns up well from the left side, and is strikingly ornamented with one large chou of dark green velvet ribbon, followed by another of a more delicate shade, the ends of which trail over the hair to the shoulder. With this costume Miss Bingham carries a white closed parasol, with roses and leaves wound about its long handle.

The gown worn by Miss Spong in this act, at Daly's is not nearly so effective. Green in color, with broad-corded velvet flowers, it is trimmed with scraps and ruchings of a paler shade of chiffon. With it Miss Spong carries a large green chiffon muff, and wears a most hideous hat. She is not over tall, and her extremely long gowns, combined with this flat little green hat, with its black lace tabs falling over the hair, make her look positively squat.

All the Daly skirts are too long. Nearly all the women have to lift them in front in order to be able to walk without tripping. As a result, the

bottoms of all the skirts, front and sides (one doesn't mind the train), are almost unrepresentably soiled to a distance of at least four inches. The pale blue corded iridescent silk which Miss Bingham wears in the last two acts is also worth describing. It is a rather elaborate affair in which to take orders, but this, perhaps, is to remind us that Lady Margaret is not a "really-and-truly" dressmaker, even if she does eat the toast like an over-worked modiste. This had the same inevitable sleeve cap of velvet, chiffon middle, and lace cuff, that adorns all save one or two of the gowns, and it had, too, a high collar of lace. It was cut princesse, quite plain in the back, and had a wide stitched collar over the shoulders, with ends reaching to the waist. A very long, old-fashioned, heavy gold chain, falling to the knees, was worn with this, ending with a turquoise cross set in old gold. Miss Bingham wore also a necklace of turquoise.

Lady Margaret looks very charming and pretty in the white canvas gown and Tam O'Shanter cap in which she makes her first appearance. The skirt is made of inverted box plaits stitched flat and left flaring at the bottom. The bodice has a many-pointed yoke of Irish lace, and the sleeves have a wide-fitted lace cuff. From above the elbow to the cuff the sleeves have that same fullness of chiffon let in to be caught again at the cuff. In the third act Miss Spong introduced a white costume, the skirt of which was an exact duplicate of the one I have just described, except that it had an insertion of flet lace about the bottom. The sleeves were identical. The bodice was of heavy lace, on a flet foundation, made in one of the Eaton shapes, ending in slashes bound with cloth. One large pearl on a gold bar fastened the lace in front. It was a more appropriate gown than Miss Bingham's, but not so elaborate.

The diamond gown made for the Queen of Portugal, in the Bijou production, and the heavy lace flounced princesse, with pearls and large concave paillettes of silver interwoven, made for the Queen of Spain, at Daly's, are both disappointing. The "diamond gown" has no diamonds anywhere, save three or four rows on the bodice, surmounting an apple-green panne velvet girdle. The skirt is bead-covered. At Daly's I could not help thinking what a pity it was the Queen of Spain let Clotilde spoil her lovely lace gown by those tawdry paillettes. It seems to me a mistake to have so much duplication in the costumes of the minor characters in the two productions, particularly as the chief theme of the plays is fashion. Minnie Dupree, in the first act at the Bijou, wore a gown made exactly like that worn by the head fitter in the modiste's establishment at Daly's. The plethora of copies of the Paquin sleeve I have already noted.

Again, all the models wore princesse gowns, much bespangled. At Daly's the models were short, thin and plain girls. At the Bijou they were tall, thin and plain. In fact, Miss Bingham has surrounded herself with a group of abnormally tall women, and I never did think this sort looked their best in princesse gowns. The sleeveless model gowns, by the way, all have tulle knotted just below the shoulder and falling over the arm. They are so similar, save in material, that I fancy Miss Alice Fischer's shriek upon seeing each model enter, "Quel jolie petit robe!" must be a bit of irony.

Cora Tanner, as Lady Gloster-Gloster, wore a wonderful gown of heavy lace and broadcloth, and a fascinating toque. All the hats have either lace or ribbon falling nearly to the shoulder from the side or back, and most of them are charming.

If Miss Annie Irish were not so pretty she could never afford to wear the hideous gown—a purple combination—in which she visits the famous dressmaker. A coat of purple moire, trimmed with Irish crochet lace, is worn with this, and is worse, if possible, than the gown. But the hat almost redeems the frock and coat. It is a mass of violet plumes, of lovely shade. Lady Pomeroy, at Daly's, wears, and

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describes for her men callers, a negligee in cream lace, with bolero and sleeve cuffs of yellow and silver spangles. This is beautifully made over an accordeon-plaited slip of white chiffon, the lace flounces all finished with dainty chiffon ruchings. At the Bijou there is no negligee, but Miss Irish, at the same stage of the play, wears a girlish pink-white-and-yellow affair, spangled.—Lady Modish in Town topics.

PAUNCEFOTE IN UNENVIABLE POSITION

Lord Pauncefote.
Who would care to be Lord Pauncefote, these days? While England and Germany are doing a Codlin and Short act over America, the popularity of the British ambassador is not being increased in America by the controversy.

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