

THE LAST FASHION CREATIONS BY THE LATE MADAME WORTH, WIDOW OF THE GREATEST DRESS-MAKER THAT EVER LIVED.



DESIGN BY MME. WORTH FOR A LONDON LEADER OF FASHION.



THE GREAT WORTH.

FROM PHOTO.



MME. CHARLES FREDERICK WORTH.



TWO OF HER CHARMING CREATIONS FOR FRENCH FETES.



RACE CAPE.

CAPE FROM MME. WORTH FOR THE RACE COURSE.



EVENING GOWN.

EVENING GOWN FOR A FRENCH NOBLEWOMAN.

MME. WORTH, widow of the Ozar of Fashions, Charles Frederick Worth, and his successor in the management of the leading dressmaking establishment of the world, on the Rue de la Paix, Paris, is dead.

How will her death affect the world-famed house? Women of fashion on both sides of the Atlantic are asking the question, and heads of firms that have longed to be rivals of Worth's are anxiously echoing it.

For forty years Charles Frederick Worth directed the fashions of the civilized world. For three years his talented widow has kept the name of Worth on a plane with its former unequalled standard in the world of frivolous and display. On Monday she died. There are hundreds who loved the sweet-voiced, kind-mannered woman, and so mourn her passing. There are thousands who grieve for the autocrat who shall never more say: "Madam, you should wear the gown thus. I have said it." There are tens of thousands who believe that by her death a standard of elegance in dress has been lowered that can never again be reached.

Will the Great House of Worth Become Extinct?

It was but a blow to the world of fashion when Charles Frederick Worth died. A greater blow has come to it in the death of Mme. Worth. Then it was assured that the wife who had helped to build the success of the great house would support its name and excellence. Now it fears the extinction of the house. There is left the son, Jean Worth, but the world, especially the cynical, fashionable world, is distrustful of sons whose fathers were geniuses. When the mother, too, is a genius, it is pessimistic.

Unfortunate Jean Worth! His mother, too, was a genius. Mme. Worth, who belidled so intelligently and lovingly with her husband, his fortunes, was as great an autocrat as he in the management of their business. Worth would tolerate no suggestion from the Empress Eugenie, who was his patron, as to the designing of her own gowns. Mme. Worth would permit no princess, European lady of title or American lady of millions to say what shade she preferred, or what lace best showed the whiteness of her fair arm or snowy neck.

Czar and Czarina of Fashions.

Worth made duchesses march before him as long and wearily as regulars on parade that he might study their figures, their coloring and their distinctive style, before designing their gowns. The parade over, he bowed them to their carriages, vouchsafing no hint of the inspiration—"divine inspiration," he said—that came to him of the gown that was to be. The duchesses were, of course, curious, but they never ventured to ask the great man any questions. They fluttered with satisfaction if he deigned to say, "In three weeks, madame, you shall be fitted promptly at 1. Adieu."

They expected no more favors in the way of particularization from his widow. If they did they were disappointed. Carriages with coronets upon the panels continued to crowd the street before the temple of adornment on the Rue de la Paix.

Some of Mme. Worth's latest creations are as beautiful as any that have borne the stamp of the magic "W." There is the silken opera cloak, falling to the feet of the wearer in folds of Oriental richness. It is of soft, shimmering white, over a foundation of yellow silk, that shows through the outer cloud of white, as a burst of sunshine through frost work. Alternate ruffles, upstanding in many a wave about the throat of the wearer, carry out the effect of the silent war of frost and sunshine, and about my lady's feet other ruffles of the two colors peep from the lining. It is a fabric harmony calculated to inspire the lover or the poet.

There is a fete gown of Nile green silk with a lace design, suggestive of the frozen spray from a fountain applied upon the graceful shoulders and tapering to a point at the front and back of the trim waist of the wearer.

A cape to be worn at the races is of pearl gray cloth with a lining of pink silk. Always the Worths sought their inspiration in nature, and Mme. Worth fashioned this cape for



The Daring Fancy Costume of Salambo for the Countess of Castiglione, Which Made Worth Famous.

beauty's shoulders with the memory of the soft shadings of a dove's breast to inspire her.

Last Designs from Her Brain.

Mme. Worth loved the magnificence of applique effects. She said they reminded her of the colors and shadows of belated autumn leaves upon the light, first snow, covering in part and glorifying it and yet not of it, and so she fashioned her latest theatre gown with the remembrance of a morning ramble through the woods as a basic idea. And the owner cried with delight when she saw it.

Her latest ball gown creations were the most beautiful. The customers who were fortunate enough to get them point to them with the pride of the connoisseur who would point to his walls and say, "There hangs Mantillo's last. His hands had the chill of death in them when he painted it. It was the last flame-burst of his genius." One is of blue crepe de chine, with long, graceful applications of pale mauve iris showing the blue of the skirt beneath in the centre of the flowers. The bodice is lightly veiled with white tulle on the left side. An elegant but less assertive is the ivory satin dancing dress with an overdress of black Russian net embroidered with flower designs in black. The overdress is drawn up on either side to show six tiny founesses of white Malines lace. Rows of Malines lace and Russian net form the bodice, whose shoulder pieces are of the raised embroidery.

Despite her silent querulous her customers loved Mme. Worth. The coldest of women feels an impulse of warm gratitude

for the one who has made her beautiful, and none knew so well as the Worths, Monsieur and Madame, how to hide ugly angles and reveal beautiful curves, how to hide in the shadows of rare lace a disgusting hollow of the neck, or to accentuate its white column-like roundness by a cunning use of a bit of dark velvet.

"Madame, pardon! May I kiss you?" asked an elderly, sallow, angular princess who had just been made to renew her long lost youth by a creation that looked like a mesh of stars imprisoned in a rosy cloud. "You have made me so happy as I have not been in twenty-five years—not since!"

And Madame turned her fair old cheek for the fervent kiss of grateful royalty. Scenes like this were frequent in the parlors on the Rue de la Paix.

Monsieur and Madame Worth were always to be seen at the dressmaking parlors at 10 a. m. They never left them before 6 p. m. They gave the closest personal supervision to every detail of the gowns that were being fashioned. There was a most congenial task, and one that netted for them a gain of several millions, less, of course, the notoriously bad debts of noble women.

The Gown That Made Worth Famous.

The dress that made Worth famous was an exquisite, tiger-like costume worn by the wondrously beautiful Countess de Castiglione at a fancy ball at the Hotel Albe, on the Champs Elysees. The Countess's role at the masquerade was Salambo, the splendid barbarian priestess of the Carthaginians. The daring and splendor of

her barbaric costume excited the ardor of the men and the rage of the women of the court. The Empress Eugenie pleaded illness as an excuse, and left the ballroom to weep for envy.

Worth once wrote of this costume: "The celebrated dress in which the Countess de Castiglione appeared at a subsequent entertainment of this character as Salambo, and which was said to be so extremely indelicate, would scarcely cause a remark if worn at the present day. It was a robe in black and scarlet plush, and was made without sleeves and with only a narrow band of gold passing over each shoulder, a style that is universally adopted now, but which in the days when evening dresses were all made with short lace trimmed sleeves reaching half way to the elbow had a rather startling effect. This of course was enhanced by the beauty of the wearer, who was formed as perfectly as a statue."

The Empress Eugenie was Worth's liberal patron until the falling of the royal house about her ears drove her from France.

"Through the influence of the Countess de Pourtales I first submitted one of my creations to the Empress," writes Worth in memoirs. "It was a walking dress in gray tulle, trimmed with black velvet ribbons, the skirt and jacket made to match, which was then an entirely new idea, though the style has since become so universal. The Empress admired it extremely."

"But, M. Worth," she said, "I should not like to be seen in public in so novel a costume. I must wait till some one else has appeared in it; for in my position I ought not to set the fashion. I must be content with following it." So the Countess de Pourtales took the dress, and six months later I made one precisely like it for the Empress, which she wore at the Vincennes races. I made her at the same time a house dress in black moire antique. She was then in mourning for her sister, the Duchesse d'Alba. The house gown was cut princess, that is to say, with skirt and corsage in one piece, the first dress ever made in that style. This was the first order from my imperial customer that I ever filled.

"The Empress appeared at a costume ball at the house of Mme. Tascher de la Pagerie, one of the relatives of the Emperor, in her first fancy costume, which was furnished by me. It was a dress in black tulle and marabout feathers, representing Night."

How the Empress Was Won by a Dressmaker.

"For her own first fancy ball I made her an elegant costume, in which she was to have impersonated Diana. The quiver was in silver, and the Empress had caused a portion of the diamonds of the crown to be mounted as a long garland of oak leaves and acorns, which she was to have worn fastened transversely across the corsage. But the mysterious death of a young relative of the imperial family prevented her from appearing at the ball except incognito and shrouded in a plain domino."

"Another fancy costume that I made for her was an exact reproduction of the dress of Marie de Medicis from a contemporary portrait. When she tried it on for the Emperor's approval, he found it too sombre, and to replace it we furnished at twenty-four hours' notice a copy of the toilet worn by Marie Antoinette in the well-known portrait of Mme. Le Brun. The hooped skirt was invented for the Empress to conceal the approaching event of the Prince Imperial, and it was the expected birth of the Princess Beatrice that led to its immediate adoption by Queen Victoria."

"As unto the bow the cord is, so unto the man is woman," sang Tennyson, and Monsieur and Madame Worth might have inspired the couplet. As he loved with a love that was almost passion the gleam of the sunlight upon rich colors, the touch of fabrics soft and brilliant as a butterfly's wing, so did she. As he studied the figure and carriage and complexion of his patrons with the nervousness of the drawing master and draped rich folds about them with the eye of an artist, so did she. As his will was supreme with a customer, so was hers. As he was quick to see the aesthetic needs of a customer, so was she. As his eye glowed with the fervor of the poet when the finished garment was as rhythmic, as glowing, as beautiful as a completed poem, so did hers, and as the fashionable world mourns his loss it mourns hers.



OPERA WRAP.

A DREAM OF LOVELINESS FOR THE LONDON SEASON.



EVENING GOWN.

LAST DESIGN MME. WORTH MADE.