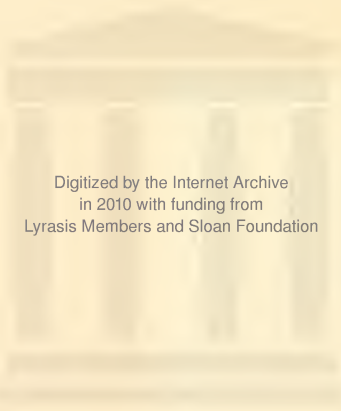


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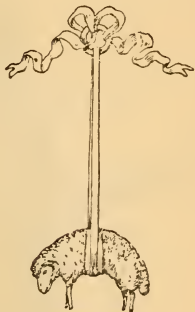
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THE
DEVELOPMENT
OF
MALE
APPAREL



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THE DEVELOPMENT OF MALE APPAREL.



ALTHOUGH many of the fashions adopted in the masculine attire at the present day may seem both useless and inartistic, a glance through the pages of history will show that they are scarcely as meaningless as they appear. In numerous instances these fashions sprang originally from some ingenious method of adding to the comfort and convenience of the wearer, though they have now developed into mere useless appendages without even the merit of beauty to recommend them. 



Let us go back, in imagination, some two thousand years and take a peep at our ancestors who lived and flourished at the period when man's dress was a much more simple affair than it is to-day. ♣ A single garment of skins, forming a sort of kilt, was worn wrapped around the middle, while no doubt in the winter, or on nights when the weather was chilly a cloak was added to the costume; but the full dress of primitive man was decidedly scanty. ♣ The fashion of the kilt, of course, survives to the present day in the Highlands, and is worn by soldiers in Scottish regiments. ♣ ♣ ♣

It was the Phœnician traders who first taught the art of dyeing and dressing wool and flax and spinning coarse cloth, and so, by degrees, man began to assume a

rather more elaborate costume. Shortly before the Roman invasion the dress of a British Chieftain consisted of a close coat or covering for the body, shaped like a tunic. It was open in front and had long close sleeves to the wrist. Below this loose pantaloons were worn, called by the Romans "braccæ," whence comes the modern term "breeches," and over the shoulders a cloak was thrown. On the head a conical shaped cap was worn and the shoes which reached to the ankles were made of raw cowhide with the hair turned outwards. "Braccæ," strange to say, seem to have been the distinguishing mark between civilized nations and barbarians. The Romans called their enemies "breeched barbarians."

After the subjugation of the

Britons by the Romans the latter's dress was adopted in Britain, as it was by most of the nations under the power of Rome. ♣ Breeches were discarded for the Roman tunic and the capacious mantle, or "toga," but this in its turn proving too cumbersome for active employment, gave place to the Greek cloak or "pallium," which was shorter and less full. ♣ The dress of a Roman soldier consisted of a short tunic, a cuirass fastened with straps of leather, and sandals. ♣ The "Braccæ" of the British barbarians was afterwards adopted by the Roman soldiery. ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣

The Saxons, when they first appeared in Britain, were far less civilized than the inhabitants, upon whom the example of Roman life had left its mark. ♣

There is no doubt that Roman civilization made some impression on the Saxons, still, they appear to have retained their national costume, which seems to have been a prototype of our coat, waistcoat, and trousers, boots or shoes of untanned leather, or else leg bandages. ♣ That "there is nothing new under the sun" applies to fashion as to other things, when we consider that the fashionable bandage leggings of the present time differ very little from those worn by our Saxon ancestors. ♣

After the Anglo-Saxon came the Norman dynasty, and the Great Seals of each monarch of that period exhibit them in dresses varying in a very slight degree from each other. ♣ The costume of the people during this period appears to have been as simple as



that of the Anglo-Saxons, and was composed of short tunics, somewhat like the peasant's smock, and tight fitting leg coverings, known as "chausses." These leg coverings sometimes consisted of bandages in various colors, and occasionally short full trousers, reaching only to the knee, were worn. The tunic could be worn either loose or gathered to the waist with a girdle. The shoes were colored, as were the boots which reached above the ankle and were finished with a plain band round the top. ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Once established in England, and in the full enjoyment of the wealth, plundered from the Anglo-Saxons, the Normans began to grow luxurious and to give way to their love of finery and a total change took place in the costume

of the people. The king himself set the example, which his subjects were not slow to follow. Not content with adorning their garments with costly jewels and embroideries, they must needs devise methods which would require a greater quantity of material and so, not only increase the expense, but give greater space for trimmings.

Pointed shoes were worn at this period, the toes being stuffed with tow to keep them stiff, though the shoes of horsemen were generally curved downwards. ● ● ● ●

During the Plantagenet period of history little change was made in civil costume; this being a military age, more attention was bestowed upon the improvement of armour. A modified Norman dress was generally worn. High boots seem to have become the

fashion, and these were sometimes strapped to represent the old time sandal. Leg bandages were still to be seen, though more frequently imitations of these were worn, that is to say a kind of tight fitting hose crossed by a sort of golden garter, in the same way that some of the leggings of to-day are crossed by straps in imitation of the puttee leg bandages. Henry II. of England introduced the short mantle, for convenience sake, and earned for himself the nickname of "Curt manteau." Gloves were worn and were no inconsiderable detail of a gentleman's attire, as the backs were heavily encrusted with jewels. The dress of the people consisted of a plain tunic, strong boots, a hood for head covering, (though this was sometimes replaced by a hat of

cloth, leather, or felt,) and somewhat clumsy fingerless gloves were worn in cold weather. ♦ ♦

About this period buttons became extremely fashionable, and were used not only for fastening garments but as ornaments. ♦ Parti-coloured tunics were introduced from Germany, and pockets began to appear. ♦ It is noticeable, also, that girdles were usually worn below the waist, and, until pockets came in, the purse was attached to this girdle. ♦ ♦ ♦

After the death of Edward I. fashion made a spurt. ♦ The pointed shoes became so exaggerated and were so inconvenient, that it was necessary to provide some means of fastening them up, in order that the wearer could move about in any sort of comfort. ♦ A ring was attached to the extreme



point, which could be hooked to a slender gold chain, and fastened either to the knee or to the girdle.

In representations of knights in armour we frequently see that a long tunic was worn above the armour. At the time when crusades were so frequent, the fighting men, encased in their heavy armour, suffered terribly from the heat they encountered in the Holy Land, and the tunic was worn over the mail, to shield the glistening metal from the sun.

With the end of the fourteenth and the commencement of the fifteenth century a reformation in dress took place. Henry IV. of England recognised the fact that the extravagance in dress, not only of the nobles, but of the commonalty likewise, threatened to seriously impoverish the coun-

try. The poorer classes had begun to ape the fashions of their superiors and the king wisely decided to quell the love of finery cherished by his subjects. • •

Only the nobility were allowed to wear wide sleeves or gowns touching the ground, and as there was a fixed limit for the number of yards to be used in each garment, it was impossible to wear a dress that was either exaggerated or too sumptuous. Girdles and daggers were forbidden to persons who had not an income of at least twenty pounds sterling, and the followers of each trade had a costume suitable to their employment assigned to them. These trade costumes, with the exception of the butcher's blue jacket, have all fallen into disuse. • • • •

It was about this time that satin

first began to claim a place amongst fashionable materials, and linen and woollen goods made a decided stride towards perfection, fine linen shirts were in demand by the gentry, although they had not yet become a conspicuous part of male attire. • •

Towards the end of the fifteenth century, when the Tudor period commenced, the gentlemen began to borrow the patterns for their garments from their fairer friends. Stomachers and little short coats, hitherto worn by ladies only, began to be adopted by the sterner sex, and even in armour this style was imitated. • It is from this period that the commencement of modern costume may be reckoned, as flowing robes began to give place to close fitting garments. • A gentleman's toilet was a lengthy

and intricate affair, and it was quite impossible for a dandy to robe himself. • The long, tight fitting hose had to be fastened by a number of silken lachets to the doublet, the doublet itself was laced up the front, the sleeves, slashed here and there to show the fine lawn shirt beneath, were also tied with silken laces. • Fortunately, morning and evening dress were identical at that time, and so, when once the elaborate toilet was performed, and my lord was arrayed in his silks and velvets and jewels he could sally forth into the morning sunshine, ready equipped for the evening's entertainment without any sense of unfitness of costume. • Caps with flowing plumes were set jauntily above long flowing locks. Afterwards the flowing locks were

shorn. • By degrees the picturesque cap and feathers were laid aside in favor of a hard steeple crowned hat. • Padding, too, became the order of the day, and a gentleman's doublet was padded so extensively that he could scarcely stoop. • Low shoes with dainty rosettes were worn, and a sort of over-shoe, called a "pantofle" was introduced in order to protect the smart under-shoe. • It is to this fashion that we trace the rubbers, in such common use at the present day. • • • • •

The ruff, which now came in, entirely put an end to the fashion of wearing flowing locks, and necessitated close cropped hair. •

Bright colors, silken stockings, and perfumed gloves were much affected by gentlemen, and pins were invented and became gene-

rally used, the numerous ribbons and laces worn calling for some method of keeping them in place. Beaver hats, made by Dutch refugees, driven from their country by the cruelties of the Inquisition, became the fashion. ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

With the seventeenth century came a totally new style of dress. Charles I. of England, whatever his faults may have been, was eminently artistic, and the stiff padded costumes were utterly abhorrent to him. He introduced the easy style of coat and long breeches, or short trousers finished with lace or ribbons, meeting the beruffled boots ; the ruff was discarded in favour of a turn down collar of lace or lawn, and the broad brimmed and be-feathered hat was introduced. ♦ The shirt was a great feature of the costume

and was daintily trimmed with lace, the coat cuffs being worn turned back and fastened with buttons, in order to display the jewelled links fastening the shirt at the wrist. (A survival of this custom still remains in our coat sleeves of to-day, the cuff being slit at the wrist and fastened with two buttons.) Two shirts were frequently worn, one being of linen and one of silk. • • •

Fashion beginning to tire of the doublet, first shortened and next lengthened it, until Charles II. of England introduced a long coat over a sort of doublet, or long waistcoat. • • • • •

Side by side with the luxuriously dressed cavalier we have the Puritan, whose dress was dark and sombre, and who wore a high steeple crowned hat, in place of the

soft hat and plumes. He sought to assume an attire which should at once distinguish him from the gay cavaliers whom he despised. Armour was gradually sinking into disuse, the more modern methods of warfare rendering it out of date. • • • • •

A new fashioned square cut coat now came in, the sleeves were wide and the skirts so voluminous that it was necessary to provide them with loops at the corners, in order that when the wearer was riding they could be looped back to two buttons at the back of the coat. (The two buttons to be found at the back of the coat of to-day are a survival of this fashion, although some people maintain that they were originally placed there at a still earlier period to support the sword belt.)



Between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries wigs were indispensable articles in the masculine attire. For a time they were worn so large and full that hats were unnecessary, and, indeed, became a nuisance, so that gentlemen carried them in the hand more frequently than on the head. Afterwards it became the custom to draw the long curls of the wig to the back and secure them with a knot of ribbons. Powder was also used. The fashion in hats was constantly changing, and for a time black beaver hats were worn, which were so expensive that it was no uncommon thing for needy gentlemen to hire their hats. Then the smart cocked hat, with variations in its form, for a time held sway. Three-cornered

cocked hats were favourites of fashion for a while ; but fell with the French Revolution of 1789. Extreme daintiness stamped the fashions of this epoch. • • •

Dainty colors and silks were chosen for the wide skirted coats (stiffened with wire to make them stand out,) long waistcoats, and knee breeches ; laces formed the soft falling cravats and wrist ruffles, and even edged the perfumed gloves ; silk stockings and low shoes covered the legs and feet, except for riding when high boots were worn. • Such a thing as a flannel shirt was unknown, the finest lawn being chosen for this garment. • By degrees the idea began to dawn upon the male mind that it was a pity to cover up entirely the soft snowy folds of this garment, and so

the waistcoats were worn open and the coats were thrown back, this being the first introduction to our modern waistcoats and coat collars. • The lapels of the coat are said to have originated in the following manner. In the days of Napoleon those who admired his rival, General Moreau, did not dare to express their sympathy openly, and so cut the collars of their coats in the shape of the letter M, to show they were his partisans. • • • • •

The lace cravat was presently discarded in favour of the cambric stock, next the muslin cravat came in and then the shirt collar gradually made its appearance and ruffles began to disappear. •

The long waistcoats, being found somewhat inconvenient, were cut short to the waist, and

at the same time the baggy skirted coats were cut short in front, leaving only the tails behind, which did away with the necessity of looping back the skirts when riding, and also introduced a coat almost identical with the dress coat of to-day. White waistcoats were worn for evening dress, whilst blue & green were the favorite colors for coats. Tight pantaloons became fashionable, beaux and leaders of fashion wearing theirs to button from waist to ankle, in order that they might fit closely. • Black was never worn except for mourning.

In cold weather short cloaks or fur-lined coats were worn, and a man of fashion was never without his muff, carried on a ribbon hung round his neck. • • • • •

The next change made in the



style of a coat was that of cutting it with a double breast, and so short in front that it did not reach the waist by some three inches. Buttons were much esteemed as ornaments, and were made of metal, jewels, or some bright substance. • Towards the end of the eighteenth century powdered hair and wigs were discontinued, and with the fall of wigs fell the cocked hat. • A round hat with a high crown and broad brim took its place, and this was the undoubted ancestor of the present century top hat. • • • • •

The growing simplicity observable in masculine attire towards the close of the eighteenth century continued to mark the fashions of the early part of the nineteenth. • For morning dress tight-fitting pantaloons of light-

colored cloth were worn, and colored coats with bright gilt buttons. • Striped cloth was considered somewhat vulgar, and fit only for wet or muddy weather, Hessian boots became fashionable, though shoes were still worn, and the hats were of beaver with high crowns and curling brims. • •

Morning and evening coats were for some time very similar, being short in front, with long tails behind; but first the tails of the coat were shortened and then front pieces were added to the morning coat, transforming it into something of the shape of a modern frock coat. • Overcoats were cut so as to fit tightly at the waist, and hang full in the skirt. • The beaux wore stays, and whilst the tight pantaloons were in vogue padded the calves of their legs.

The Cossack trousers next came into fashion, and tight pantaloons disappeared. By the year 1832 trousers had assumed almost their present shape. ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

In the year 1835 black coats and colored waistcoats began to be worn, and for evenings knee breeches took the place of trousers.

The coat sleeves were worn long, fitting tightly at the wrist, with the cuff projecting over the hand. The cloak took the place of the great coat, the so called Polish cloak being a novelty of this period. This garment was made with a cape to button across the front, and could be worn either single or double. ♦ ♦ ♦

For some years there was very little change in masculine attire, colored coats and trousers came in and were worn for evening dress,

the tails of the coats were broader than the present mode and velvet collars were worn. The waistcoats were very resplendent, white or colored satin handsomely embroidered were worn for evening dress, these, though short at the waist were not cut low as now.

Present day fashions have vastly changed from those of olden times, when beauty, color, and frequently gross exaggeration, were the order of the day. To excite attention by anything at all remarkable in the way of color or texture is considered both vulgar and ridiculous. Too lavish a display of jewelry stamps a man at once as "not quite a gentleman," and silks and satins for a man's attire, except as linings, are things of the past.

The evening dress of the early part of the nineteenth century has



gradually toned down into the rigorous black cloth swallow-tailed coat and black trousers of modern fashion, even the gorgeous waistcoats are tabooed, although from time to time attempts are made to revive them. ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

In the old barbaric days men chose the brightest colors for raiment, whereas now want of color is the keynote of correct fashion. ♦ A gentleman's attire of to-day is extremely severe in style, and he seeks to display his good taste in dress by the perfect lines of his garments and by the quality of the material necessary to preserve these rather than by any thing exaggerated or obtrusive. ♦

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