ENGLISH COSTUME

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MIDDLE AGES

ENGLISH COSTUME

I.—EARLY ENGLISH

SOME PRESS OPINIONS

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ENGLISH COSTUME

II.—MIDDLE AGES

ENGLISH COSTUME

BY

DION CLAYTON CALTHROP

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A MAN OF THE TIME OF RICHARD II.

(1377—1399)

His chaperon, or hood, is twisted and tied about his head with the liripipe, the elongated peak of his hood, thrown over his shoulders.

ENGLISH COSTUME

BY

DION CLAYTON CALTHROP

II.

MIDDLE AGES

LONDON
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INTRODUCTION

THE world, if we choose to see it so, is a complicated picture of people dressing and undressing. The history of the world is composed of the chat of a little band of tailors seated cross-legged on their boards; they gossip across the centuries, feeling, as they should, very busy and important. Someone made the coat of many colours for Joseph, another cut into material for Elijah's mantle.

Baldwin, from his stall on the site of the great battle, has only to stretch his neck round to nod to the tailor who made the toga for Julius Cæsar; has only to lean forward to smile to Pasquino, the wittiest of tailors.

John Pepys, the tailor, gossips with his neighbour who cut that jackanapes coat with silver buttons so proudly worn by Samuel Pepys, his son. Mr. Schweitzer, who cut Beau Brummell's coat, talks to Mr. Meyer, who shaped his panta-

loons. Our world is full of the sound of scissors, the clipping of which, with the gossiping tongues, drown the grander voices of history.

As you will see, I have devoted myself entirely to civil costume—that is, the clothes a man or a woman would wear from choice, and not by reason of an appointment to some ecclesiastical post, or to a military calling, or to the Bar, or the Bench. Such clothes are but symbols of their trades and professions, and have been dealt with by persons who specialize in those professions.

I have taken the date of the Conquest as my starting-point, and from that date—a very simple period of clothes—I have followed the changes of the garments reign by reign, fold by fold, button by button, until we arrive quite smoothly at Beau Brummell, the inventor of modern clothes, the prophet of cleanliness.

I have taken considerable pains to trace the influence of one garment upon its successor, to reduce the wardrobe for each reign down to its simplest cuts and folds, so that the reader may follow quite easily the passage of the coat from its birth to its ripe age, and by this means may not

only know the clothes of one time, but the reasons for those garments. To the best of my knowledge, such a thing has never been done before; most works on dress try to include the world from Adam to Charles Dickens, lump a century into a page, and dismiss the ancient Egyptians in a couple of colour plates.

So many young gentlemen have blown away their patrimony on feathers and tobacco that it is necessary for us to confine ourselves to certain gentlemen and ladies in our own country. A knowledge of history is essential to the study of mankind, and a knowledge of history is never perfect without a knowledge of the clothes with which to dress it.

A man, in a sense, belongs to his clothes; they are so much a part of him that, to take him seriously, one must know how he walked about, in what habit, with what air.

I am compelled to speak strongly of my own work because I believe in it, and I feel that the series of paintings in these volumes are really a valuable addition to English history. To be modest is often to be excessively vain, and, having made

an exhaustive study of my subject from my own point of view, I do not feel called upon to hide my knowledge under a bushel. Of course, I do not suggest that the ordinary cultured man should acquire the same amount of knowledge as a painter, or a writer of historical subjects, or an actor, but he should understand the clothes of his own people, and be able to visualize any date in which he may be interested.

One half of the people who talk glibly of Beau Brummell have but half an idea when he lived, and no idea that, for example, he wore whiskers. Hamlet they can conjure up, but would have some difficulty in recognising Shakespeare, because most portraits of him are but head and shoulders. Napoleon has stamped himself on men's minds very largely through the medium of a certain form of hat, a lock of hair, and a gray coat. In future years an orchid will be remembered as an emblem.

I have arranged, as far as it is possible, that each plate shall show the emblem or distinguishing mark of the reign it illustrates, so that the continuity of costume shall be remembered by the arresting notes.

As the fig-leaf identifies Adam, so may the chaperon twisted into a cockscomb mark Richard II. As the curled and scented hair of Alcibiades occurs to our mind, so shall Beau Nash manage his clouded cane. Elizabeth shall be helped to the memory by her Piccadilly ruff; square Henry VIII. by his broad-toed shoes and his little flat cap; Anne Boleyn by her black satin nightdress; James be called up as padded trucks; Maximilian as puffs and slashes; D'Orsay by the curve of his hat; Tennyson as a dingy brigand; Gladstone as a collar; and even more recent examples, as the Whistlerian lock and the Burns blue suit.

And what romantic incidents may we not hang upon our clothes-line! The cloak of Samuel Pepys ('Dapper Dick,' as he signed himself to a certain lady) sheltering four ladies from the rain; Sir Walter Raleigh spreading his cloak over the mud to protect the shoes of that great humorist Elizabeth (I never think of her apart from the saying, 'Ginger for pluck'); Mary, Queen of Scots, ordering false attires of hair during her captivity — all these scenes clinched into reality by the knowledge of the dress proper to them.

And what are we doing to help modern history —the picture of our own times—that it may look beautiful in the ages to come? I cannot answer you that.

Some chapters of this work have appeared in the *Connoisseur*, and I have to thank the editor for his courtesy in allowing me to reproduce them.

I must also thank Mr. Pownall for his help in the early stages of my labours.

One thing more I must add: I do not wish this book to go forth and be received with that frigid politeness which usually welcomes a history to the shelves of the bookcase, there to remain unread. The book is intended to be read, and is not wrapped up in grandiose phrases and a great wind about nothing; I would wish to be thought more friendly than the antiquarian and more truthful than the historian, and so have endeavoured to show, in addition to the body of the clothes, some little of their soul.

DION CLAYTON CALTHROP.

St. Valentine's Day, 1906.

EDWARD THE FIRST

Reigned thirty-five years: 1272—1307.
Born 1239. Married, 1254, Eleanor of Castile;
1299, Margaret of France.

MEN AND WOMEN

UNTIL the performance of the Sherborne Pageant, I had never had the opportunity of seeing a mass of people, under proper, open-air conditions, dressed in the peasant costume of Early England.

For once traditional stage notions of costume were cast aside, and an attempt was made, which was perfectly successful, to dress people in the colours of their time.

The mass of simple colours—bright reds, blues, and greens—was a perfect expression of the date, giving, as nothing else could give, an appearance of an illuminated book come to life.

One might imagine that such a primary-coloured crowd would have appeared un-English, and too

Oriental or Italian; but with the background of trees and stone walls, the English summer sky distressed with clouds, the moving cloud shadows and the velvet grass, these fierce hard colours looked distinctly English, undoubtedly of their date, and gave the spirit of the ages, from a clothes point of view, as no other colours could have done. In doing this they attested to the historical truth of the play.

It seemed natural to see an English crowd one blazing jewel-work of colour, and, by the excellent taste and knowledge of the designer, the jewel-like hardness of colour was consistently kept.

It was interesting to see the difference made to this crowd by the advent of a number of monks in uniform black or brown, and to see the setting in which these jewel-like peasants shone — the play of brilliant hues amid the more sombre browns and blacks, the shifting of the blues and reds, the strong notes of emerald green — all, like the symmetrical accidents of the kaleidscope, settling into their places in perfect harmony.

The entire scene bore the impress of the spirit

of historical truth, and it is by such pageants that we can imagine coloured pictures of an England of the past.

Again, we could observe the effect of the light-reflecting armour, cold, shimmering steel, coming in a play of colour against the background of peasants, and thereby one could note the exact appearance of an ordinary English day of such a date as this of which I now write, the end of the thirteenth century.

The mournful procession bearing the body of Queen Eleanor of Castile, resting at Waltham, would show a picture in the same colours as the early part of the Sherborne Pageant.

Colour in England changed very little from the Conquest to the end of the reign of Edward I.; the predominant steel and leather, the gay, simple colours of the crowds, the groups of one colour, as of monks and men-at-arms, gave an effect of constantly changing but ever uniform colours and designs of colour, exactly, as I said before, like the shifting patterns of the kaleidoscope.

It was not until the reign of Edward II. that the effect of colour changed and became pied, and later, with the advent of stamped velvets, heavily

designed brocades, and the shining of satins, we get that general effect best recalled to us by memories of Italian pictures; we get, as it were, a varnish of golden-brown over the crude beauties of the earlier times.

It is intensely important to a knowledge of costume to remember the larger changes in the aspect of crowds from the colour point of view. A knowledge of history—by which I do not mean a parrot-like acquirement of dates and Acts of Parliament, but an insight into history as a living thing—is largely transmitted to us by pictures; and, as pictures practically begin for us with the Tudors, we must judge of coloured England from illuminated books. In these you will go from white, green, red, and purple, to such colours as I have just described: more vivid blues, reds, and greens, varied with brown, black, and the colour of steel, into the chequered pages of pied people and striped dresses, into rich-coloured people, people in black; and as you close the book and arrive at the wall-picture, back to the rich-coloured people again.

The men of this time, it must be remembered, were more adapted to the arts of war than to those

A MAN AND WOMAN OF THE TIME OF EDWARD I. (1272—1307)

THE sleeves of the man's overcoat through which he has thrust his arms are complete sleeves, and could be worn in the ordinary manner but that they are too long to be convenient; hence the opening.

of peace; and the knight who was up betimes and into his armour, and to bed early, was not a man of so much leisure that he could stroll about in gay clothes of an inconvenient make. His principal care was to relieve himself of his steel burden and get into a loose gown, belted at the waist, over

which, if the weather was inclement, he would wear a loose coat. This coat was made with a hood attached to it, very loose and easy about the neck and very wide about the body; its length was a matter of choice, but it was usual to wear it not much below the knees. The sleeves were also wide and long, having at a convenient place

a hole cut, through which the arms could be placed.

The men wore their hair long and brushed out about the ears—long, that is, to the nape of the neck. They also were most commonly bearded, with or without a moustache.

Upon their heads they wore soft, small hats, with a slight projection at the top, the brim of the hat turned up, and scooped away in front.

Fillets of metal were worn about the hair with some gold-work upon them to represent flowers; or they wore, now and again, real chaplets of flowers.

There was an increase of heraldic ornament in this age, and the surcoats were often covered with a large device.

These surcoats, as in the previous reign, were split from shoulder to bottom hem, or were sewn up below the waist; for these, thin silk, thick silk (called samite), and sendal, or thick stuff, was used, as also for the gowns.

The shoes were peaked, and had long toes, but nothing extravagant, and they were laced on the outside of the foot. The boots came in a peak up to the knee.

The peasant was still very Norman in appearance, hooded, cloaked, with ill-fitting tights and clumsy shoes; his dress was often of bright colours on festivals, as was the gown and head-hankerchief of his wife.

Thus you see that, for ordinary purposes, a man dressed in some gown which was long, loose, and comfortable, the sleeves of it generally tight for freedom, so that they did not hang about his arm, and his shoes, hat, cloak, everything, was as soft and free as he could get them.

The woman also followed in the lines of comfort: her under-gown was full and slack at the waist, the sleeves were tight, and were made to unbutton from wrist to elbow; they stopped short at the wrist with a cuff.

Her upper gown had short, wide sleeves, was fastened at the back, and was cut but roughly to the figure. The train of this gown was very long.

They sought for comfort in every particular but one: for though I think the gorget very becoming, I think that it must have been most distressing to wear. This gorget was a piece of white linen wrapped about the throat, and pinned

into its place; the ends were brought up to meet a wad of hair over the ears and there fastened, in this way half framing the face.

The hair was parted in the middle, and rolled over pads by the ears, so as to make a cushion on which to pin the gorget. This was the general fashion.

Now, the earlier form of head-dress gave rise to another fashion. The band which had been tied round the head to keep the wimple in place was enlarged and stiffened with more material, and so became a round linen cap, wider at the top than at the bottom. Sometimes this cap was hollow-crowned, so that it was possible to bring the wimple under the chin, fasten it into place with the cap, and allow it to fall over the top of the cap in folds; sometimes the cap was solidly crowned, and was pleated; sometimes the cap met the gorget, and no hair showed between them.

What we know as 'the true lovers' knot' was

sometimes used as an ornament sewn on to dresses or gowns.

You may know the effigy of Queen Eleanor in Westminster Abbey, and if you do, you will see an example of the very plainest dress of the time. She has a shaped mantle over her shoulders, which she is holding together by a strap; the long mantle or robe is over a plain, loosely-pleated gown, which fits only at the shoulders; her hair is unbound, and she wears a trefoil crown upon her head.

The changes in England can best be seen by such monuments as Edward caused to be erected in memory of his beloved wife. The arts of peace were indeed magnificent, and though the knight was the man of war, he knew how to choose his servant in the great arts.

Picture such a man as Alexander de Abyngdon, 'le Imaginator,' who with William de Ireland

carved the statues of the Queen for five marks each—such a man, with his gown hitched up into his belt, his hood back on his shoulders, watching his statue put into place on the cross at Charing. He is standing by Roger de Crundale, the architect of that cross, and he is directing the workmen who are fixing the statue. . . . A little apart you may picture Master William Tousell, goldsmith, of London, a very important person, who is making a metal statue of the Queen and one of her father-in-law, Henry III., for Westminster Abbey. At the back men and women in hoods and wimples, in short tunics and loose gowns. A very brightly-coloured picture, though the dyes of the dresses be faded by rain and sun—they are the finer colours for that: Master Tousell, no doubt, in a short tunic for riding, with his loose coat on him, the heavy hood back, a little cap on his head; the workmen with their tunics off, a twist of coloured stuff about their waists, their heads bare.

It is a beautiful love-story this, of fierce Edward, the terror of Scotland, for Eleanor, whom he 'cherished tenderly,' and 'whom dead we do not cease to love.'

The same man, who could love so tenderly and well, who found a fantastic order of chivalry in the Round Table of Kenilworth, could there swear on the body of a swan the death of Comyn, Regent of Scotland, and could place the Countess of Buchan, who set the crown upon the head of Bruce, in a cage outside one of the towers of Berwick.

Despite the plain cut of the garments of this time, and the absence of superficial trimmings, it must have been a fine sight to witness one hundred lords and ladies, all clothed in silk, seated about the Round Table of Kenilworth.

EDWARD THE SECOND

Reigned twenty years: 1307—1327.
Born 1284. Married, 1308, Isabella of France.

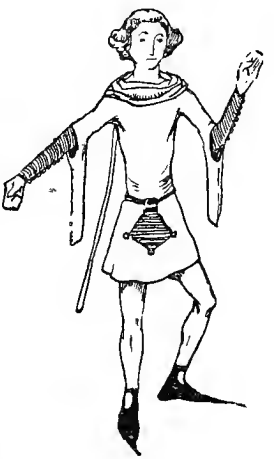
MEN AND WOMEN

WHETHER the changes in costume that took place in this reign were due to enterprising tailors, or to an exceptionally hot summer, or to the fancy of the King, or to the sprightliness of Piers Gaveston, it is not possible to say. Each theory is arguable, and, no doubt, in some measure each theory is right, for, although men followed the new new mode, ladies adhered to their earlier fashions.

Take the enterprising tailor—call him an artist. The old loose robe was easy of cut; it afforded no outlet for his craft; it cut into a lot of material, was easily made at home—it was, in fact, a baggy affair that fitted nowhere. Now, is it not possible that some tailor-artist, working upon the vanity of a lordling who was proud of his figure, showed how

he could present this figure to its best advantage in a body-tight garment which should reach only to his hips?

Take the hot summer. You may or may not know that a hot summer some years ago suddenly transformed the City of London from a place of top-hats and black coats into a place of flannel jackets and hats of straw, so that it is now possible for a man to arrive at his City office clad according to the thermometer, without incurring the severe displeasure of the Fathers of the City.

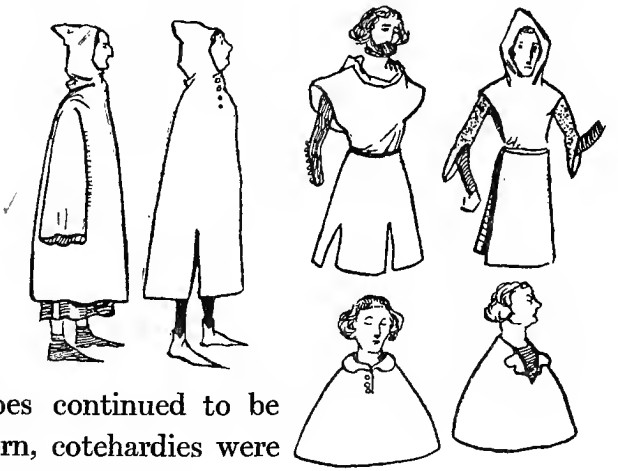


It seems that somewhere midway between 1307 and 1327 men suddenly dropped their long robes, loosely tied at the waist, and appeared in what looked uncommonly like vests, and went by the name of 'cotehardies.'

It must have been surprising to men who remembered England clothed in long and decorous robes to see in their stead these gay, debonair, tight vests of pied cloth or parti-coloured silk.

Piers Gaveston, the gay, the graceless but graceful favourite, clever at the tournament, warlike and vain, may have instituted this complete revolution in clothes with the aid of the weak King.

Sufficient, perhaps, to say that, although long



robes continued to be worn, cotehardies were all the fashion.

There was a general tendency to exaggeration. The hood was attacked by the dandies, and, instead of its modest peak, they caused to be added a long pipe of the material, which they called a 'liripipe.'

Every quaint thought and invention for tieing up this liripipe was used: they wound it about

their heads, and tucked the end into the coil; they put it about their necks, and left the end dangling; they rolled it on to the top of their heads.

The countryman, not behindhand in quaint ideas, copied the form of a Bishop's hood, and appeared with his cloth hood divided into two peaks, one on either side of his head.

This new cotehardie was cut in several ways. Strictly speaking, it was a cloth or silk vest, tight to the body, and close over the hips; the length was determined by the fancy of the wearer. It also had influence on the long robes still worn, which, although full below the waist to the feet, now more closely fitted the body and shoulders.

The fashionable sleeves were tight to the elbow, and from there hanging and narrow, showing a sleeve belonging to an undergarment.

The cloak also varied in shape. The heavy travelling-cloak, with the hood attached, was of the old pattern, long, shapeless, with or without

hanging sleeves, loose at the neck, or tightly buttoned.

Then there was a hooded cloak, with short sleeves, or with the sleeves cut right away, a sort of hooded surcoat. Then there were tow distinct forms of cape: one a plain, circular cape, not very deep, which had a plain, round, narrow collar of fur or cloth, and two or three buttons at the neck; and there was the round cape, without a collar, but with turned back lapels of fur. This form of cape is often to be seen.

The boots and shoes were longer at the toes, and were sometimes buttoned at the sides.

The same form of hats remain, but these were now treated with fur brims.

Round the waist there was always a belt, generally of plain black leather; from it depended a triangular pouch, through which a dagger was sometimes stuck.

The time of parti-coloured clothes was just beginning, and the cotehardie was often made from two coloured materials, dividing the body in

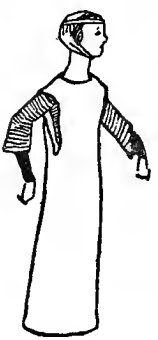
A MAN AND WOMAN OF THE TIME OF EDWARD II. (1307—1327)

NOTICE the great length of liripipe on the man's hood, also his short tunic of rayed cloth, his hanging sleeve and his undersleeve.

The woman has her hair dressed in two side-plaits, to which the gorget or neckcloth is pinned.

two parts by the colour difference; it was the commencement of the age which ran its course during the next reign, when men were striped diagonally, vertically, and in angular bars; when one leg was blue and the other red.

You will note that all work was improving in this reign when you hear that the King paid the wife of John de Bureford 100 marks for an embroidered cope, and that a great green hanging was procured for King's Hall, London, for solemn feasts—a hanging of wool, worked with figures of kings and beasts. The ladies made little practical change in their dress, except to wear an excess of clothes against the lack of draperies indulged in by the men.



It is possible to see three garments, or portions of them, in many dresses. First, there was a stuff gown, with tight sleeves buttoned to the elbow from the wrist; this sometimes showed one or two buttons under

the gorget in front, and was fitted, but not tightly, to the figure. It fell in pleated folds to the feet, and had a long train; this was worn alone, we may suppose, in summer. Second, there was a gown to go over this other, which had short, wide sleeves, and was full in the skirts. One or other

of these gowns had a train, but if the upper gown had a train the under one had not, and *vice versâ*. Third, there was a surcoat like to a man's, not over-long or full, with the sleeve-holes cut out wide; this went over both or either of the other gowns.

Upon the head they wore the wimple, the fillet, and about the throat the gorget.

The arrangement of the wimple and fillet were new, for the hair was now plaited in two tails, and

these brought down straight on either side of the face; the fillet was bound over the wimple in order to show the plait, and the gorget met the wimple behind the plait instead of over it.

The older fashion of hair-dressing remained, and the gorget was pinned to the wads of hair over the ears, without the covering of the wimple.

Sometimes the fillet was very wide, and placed low on the head over a wimple tied like a gorget; in this way the two side-plaits showed only in front and appeared covered at side-face, while the wimple and broad fillet hid all the top hair of the head.

Very rarely a tall, steeple head-dress was worn over the wimple, with a hanging veil; but this was not common, and, indeed, it is not a mark of the time, but belongs more properly to a later date. However, I have seen such a head-dress drawn at or about this time, so must include it.

The semicircular mantle was still in use, held over the breast by means of a silk cord.

It may seem that I describe these garments in too simple a way, and the rigid antiquarian would have made comment on courtepys, on gamboised garments, on cloth of Gaunt, or cloth of Dunster.

I may tell you that a gambeson was the quilted tunic worn under armour, and, for the sake of those whose tastes run into the arid fields of such research, that you may call it wambasium, gobison, wambeys, gambiex, gaubeson, or half a dozen other names; but, to my mind, you will get no further with such knowledge.

Falding is an Irish frieze; cyclas is a gown; courtepy is a short gown; kirtle—again, if we know too much we cannot be accurate—kirtle may be a loose gown, or an apron, or a jacket, or a riding-cloak.

The tabard was an embroidered surcoat—that is, a surcoat on which was displayed the heraldic device of the owner.

Let us close this reign with its mournful end, when Piers Gaveston feels the teeth of the Black Dog of Warwick, and is beheaded on Blacklow Hill; when Hugh le Despenser is hanged on a gibbet; when the Queen lands at Orwell, conspiring against her husband, and the King is a prisoner at Kenilworth.

Here at Kenilworth the King hears himself deposed.

'Edward, once King of England,' is hereafter

accounted 'a private person, without any manner of royal dignity.'

Here Edward, in a plain black gown, sees the steward of his household, Sir Thomas Blount, break his staff of office, done only when a King is dead, and discharge all persons engaged in the royal service.

Parliament decided to take this strong measure in January; in the following September Edward was murdered in cold blood at Berkeley Castle.

EDWARD THE THIRD

Reigned fifty years: 1327—1377.
Born 1312. Married, 1328, Philippa of Hainault.

THE MEN

KINGS were Kings in those days; they managed England as a nobleman managed his estates.

Edward I., during the year 1299, changed his abode on an average three times a fortnight, visiting in one year seventy-five towns and castles.

Edward II. increased his travelling retinue until, in the fourth year of the reign of Edward III., the crowd who accompanied that King had grown to such proportions that he was forced to introduce a law forbidding knights and soldiers to bring their wives and families with them.

Edward III., with his gay company, would not be stopped as he rode out of one of the gates of London to pay toll of a penny a cart and a farthing a horse, nor would any of his train.

This toll, which included threepence a week on gravel and sand carts going in or out of the City, was raised to help pay for street repairs, the streets and roads of that time being in a continual state of slush, mud, and pits of water.

Let us imagine Edward III. and his retinue passing over Wakefield Bridge before he reduced his enormous company.

The two priests, William Kaye and William Bull, stand waiting for the King outside the new Saint Mary's Chapel. First come the guard of four-and-twenty archers in the King's livery; then a Marshal and his servants (the other King's Marshal has ridden by some twenty-four hours ago); then comes the Chancellor and his clerks, and with them a good horse carrying the Rolls (this was stopped in the fourth year of Edward's reign); then they see the Chamberlain, who will look to it that the King's rooms are decent and in order, furnished with benches and carpets; next comes the Wardrobe Master, who keeps the King's accounts; and, riding beside the King, the first personal officer of the kingdom, the Seneschal; after that a gay company of knights and their ladies, merchants, monks dressed as ordinary lay-

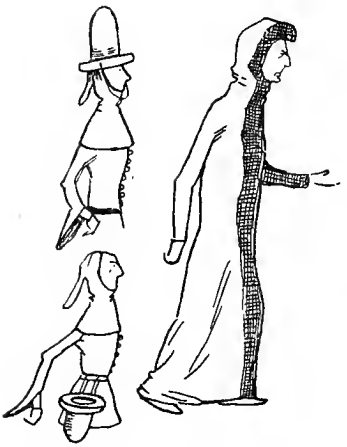
men for travelling, soldiers of fortune, women, beggars, minstrels—a motley gang of brightly-clothed people, splashed with the mud and dust of the cavalcade.

Remembering the condition of the day, the rough travelling, the estates far apart, the dirty inns, one must not imagine this company spick and span.

The ladies are riding astride, the gentlemen are in civil garments or half armour.

Let us suppose that it is summer, and but an hour or so after a heavy shower. The heat is oppressive: the men have slung their hats at their belts, and have pushed their hoods from their heads; their heavy cloaks, which they donned hastily against the rain, are off now, and hanging across their saddles.

These cloaks vary considerably in shape. Here we may see a circular cloak, split down the right



side from the neck, it buttons on the shoulder. Here is another circular cloak, jagged at the edge; this buttons at the neck. One man is riding in a cloak, parti-coloured, which is more like a gown, as it has a hood attached to it, and reaches down to his feet.

Nearly every man is alike in one respect—clean-shaven, with long hair to his neck, curled at the ears and on the forehead.

Most men wear the cotehardie, the well-fitting garment buttoned down the front, and ending over the hips. There is every variety of cotehardie—the long one, coming nearly to the knees; the short one, half-way up the thigh. Some are buttoned all the way down the front, and others only with two or three buttons at the neck

Round the hips of every man is a leather belt, from which hangs a pouch or purse.

Some of these purses are beautiful with stitched arabesque designs; some have silver and enamel clasps; some are plain black cloth or natural-coloured leather; nearly all, however, are black.

The hoods over the men's heads vary in a number of ways: some are very full in the cape, which is jagged at the hem; some are close about the neck and are plain; some have long liripipes falling from the peak of the hood, and others have a liripipe of medium length.

There are two or three kinds of hat worn, and felt and fur caps of the usual shape—round, with a rolled-up brim and a little peak on the top. Some of the hats are tall-crowned, round hats with a close, thick brim—these have strings through the brim so that the hat may be strung on the belt when it is not in use; other hats are of the long, peaked shape, and now and again one may see a feather stuck into them; a third variety shows the brim of a high-crowned hat, castellated.

Among the knights you will notice the general tendency to parti-coloured clothes, not only divided completely into halves of two colours, but striped diagonally, vertically, and horizontally, so giving a very diverse appearance to the mass of colour.

Here and there a man is riding in his silk surcoat, which is embroidered with his coat of arms or powdered with his badge.

Here are cloth, velvet, silk, and woollen stuffs, all of fine dyes, and here is some fine silk cote-hardie with patterns upon it gilt in gold leaf, and there is a magnificent piece of stuff, rich in design, from the looms of Palermo.

Among the merchants we shall see some more sober colours and quieter cut of clothes; the archers in front are in leather tunics, and these quiet colours in front, and the respectable merchants behind, enclose the brilliant blaze of colour round the King.

Behind all come the peasants, minstrels, mummers, and wandering troupes of acrobats; here is a bear-ward in worn leather cloak and hood, his legs strapped at the ankle, his shoes tied on with thongs; here is a woman in a hood, open at the neck and short at the back: she wears a smocked apron; here is a beggar with a hood of black stuff over his head—a hood with two peaks, one on either side of his head; and again, here is a minstrel with a patched round cloak, and a mummer with a two-peaked hood, the peaks stuffed out stiff, with bells jangling on the points of them.

Again, among this last group, we must notice the old-fashioned loose tunics, the coif over the head, tied under the chin, wooden-soled shoes and pouch-gloves.

There are some Norfolk merchants and some

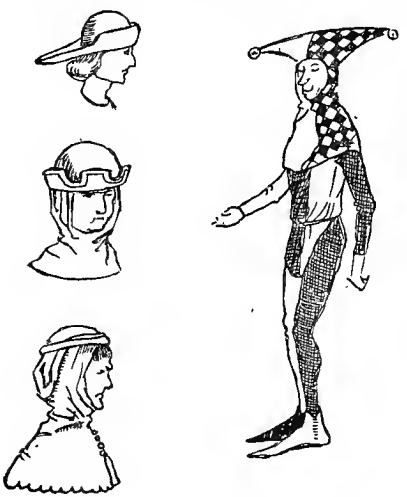
merchants from Flanders among the crowd, and they talk as best they can in a sort of French-Latin-English jargon among themselves; they speak of England as the great wool-producing country, the tax on which produced £30,000 in one year; they talk of the tax, its uses and abuses, and how

Norfolk was proved the richest county in wool by the tax of 1341.

The people of England little thought to hear artillery used in a field of battle so soon as 1346, when on August 26 it was used for the first time, nor did they realize the horrors that were to come in 1349, when the Great Plague was to sweep over England and kill half the population.

There is one man in this crowd who has been marked by everybody. He is a courtier, dressed in the height of fashion. His cotehardie fits him very well: the sleeves are tight from elbow to wrist, as are the sleeves of most of his fellows—some, however, still wear the hanging sleeve and show an under-sleeve—and his sleeve is buttoned from wrist to elbow. He wears the newest fashion upon his arm, the tippet, a piece of silk which is made like a detachable cuff with a long streamer hanging from it; his cotehardie is of medium length, jagged at the bottom, and it is of the finest Sicilian silk, figured with a fine pattern; round his hips he wears a jewelled belt. His hood is parti-

coloured and jagged at the edge and round his face, and his liripipe is very long. His tights are parti-coloured, and his shoes, buttoned up the front, are long-toed and are made of red-and-white chequered leather. By him rides a knight, also in the height of fashion, but less noticeable: he has his cotehardie skirt split up in front and turned back; he has not any buttons on his sleeves, and his belt about his waist holds a large square pouch; his shoes are a little above his ankles, and are buckled over the instep. His hair is shorter than is usual, and it is not curled.



As we observe these knights, a party of armed knights come riding down the road towards the cavalcade; they have come to greet the King.

These men have ridden through the rain, and

now, as they come closer, one can see that their armour is already red with rust.

So the picture should remain on your mind, as I have imagined it for you: the knights in armour and surcoats covered with their heraldic device; the archers; the gay crowd of knights in parti-coloured clothes; the King, in his cotehardie of plain black velvet and his black beaver hat, just as he looked after Calais in later years; the merchants; the servants in parti-coloured liveries of their masters' colours; the tattered crowd behind; and, with the aid of the drawings, you should be able to visualize the picture.

Meanwhile Edward will arrive at his destination, and to soothe him before sleep, he will read out of the book of romances, illustrated by Isabella, the nun of Aumbresbury, for which he had paid £66 13s. 4d., which sum was heavy for those days, when £6 would buy twenty-four swans. £66 13s. 4d. is about £800 of our money to-day.

THE WOMEN

'I looked on my left half as the lady taught me,
And was aware of a woman worthily clothed,
Trimmed with fur, the finest on earth,
Crowned with a crown, the King had none better.
Handsomely her fingers were fretted with gold wire,
And thereon red rubies, as red as any hot coal,
And diamonds of dearest price, and double manner of sapphires,
Orientals and green beryls. . . .
Her robe was full rich, of red scarlet fast dyed,
With bands of red gold and of rich stones;
Her array ravished me, such richness saw I never.'

Piers the Plowman.

There are two manuscripts in existence the illuminations in which give the most wonderfully pictorial idea of this time; they are the manuscript marked MS. Bodl., Misc. 264, in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, and the Loutrell Psalter in the British Museum.

The Loutrell Psalter is, indeed, one of the most notable books in the world; it is an example of illumination at the height of that art; it has for illustrator a person, not only of a high order of intelligence, but a person possessed of the very

A WOMAN OF THE TIME OF HENRY V.

(1413—1422)

HER surcoat is stiffened in front with fur and shaped with a band of metal. Her belt is low on the hips of the underdress. The horns on her head carry the large linen wimple.

A MAN OF THE TIME OF EDWARD III.
(1327—1377)

ROUND his arms you will see the curious tippet, the jagged ends of which hang down; these are the remains of the pendant sleeves. His shoes are buttoned in front.

spirit of Gothic humour, who saw rural England, not only with the eyes of an artist, but with the eyes of a gossiping philosopher.

Both this book and the book in the Bodleian Library were illustrated by persons who were charged to the brim with the spirit of their age; they were Chaucerian in their gay good-humour and in their quaint observation, and they have that moral knowledge and outspoken manner which characterize William Langland, whose 'Piers the Plowman' I have quoted above.

With Chaucer, Langland, and these illuminators we have a complete exhibition of English life of these times. The pulse of rural England is felt by them in a most remarkable way; the religion, language, thought, politics, the whole trend of rural, provincial, and Court life may be gathered from their books.

The drawings in the Loutrell Psalter were completed before the year 1340, and they give us all that wonderful charm, that intimate knowledge, which we enjoy in the 'Canterbury Pilgrims' and the 'Vision of Piers Plowman.'

There seems to be something in road-travelling which levels all humanity: there is no road in

England which does not throb with history; there is no poem or story written about roads in England which does not in some way move the Englishness in us. Chaucer and Langland make comrades of us as they move along the highway, and with them we meet, on terms of intimacy, all the characters of the fourteenth century. With these illuminators of the Loutrell Psalter and the Bodleian MS. we see actually the stream of English life along a crowded thoroughfare.

In these books we may see drawings of every form of agricultural life and manorial existence: we see the country sports, the bear-baiting, and the cock-fighting; we see the harvesters with straw hats, scythes, and reaping-hooks; we see carters, carriers, and great carriages, all depicted in a manner which we can only compare, in later years, to the broad humour of Hogarth; and, as we turn the priceless pages over, the whole fourteenth-century world passes before our eyes—japers and jugglers; disours and jesters; monk, priest, pilgrim, and pardoner; spendthrift and wench; hermits, good and evil; lords, ladies, and Kings.

I have written of the men and their dress—how they were often—very often—dirty, dusty, and

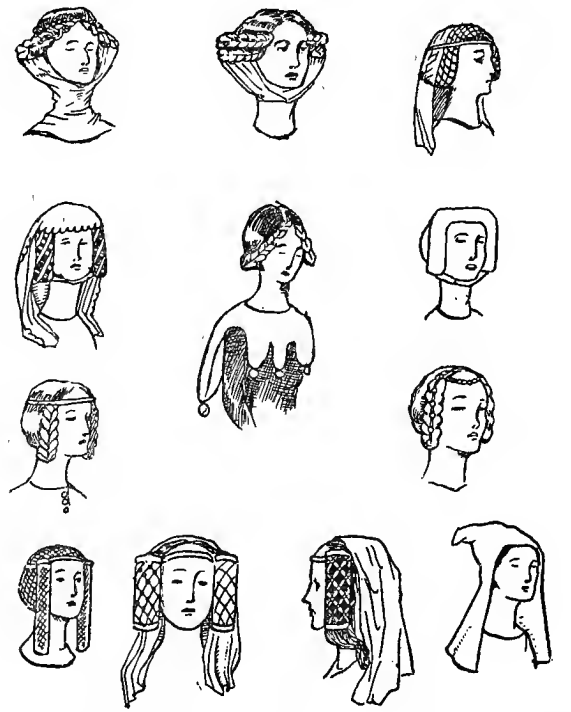
travel-stained—of the red-rusted armour and the striped and chequered clothes, and now I must write of the women and the manner of their dress.

Of the time, you must remember that it was the time of chivalry, when there was a Round Table of Knights at Windsor, founded in 1345; when the Order of the Garter was founded; when tiltings and all manner of tournaments were at their height; and you listen to the minstrels of King Edward's household playing upon the trumpet, the cytole, the pipe, the taberet, the clarion, and the fiddle.

St. George, the Primate of Egypt in the fourth century, had now risen to public esteem and notice, so that he became in this time not only the patron saint of chivalry, but the tutelar saint of England.

Boys were taken from the care of the ladies of the household at the age of seven, when they became pages to knights, and were sworn to devote themselves to the graces and favours of some girl. At fourteen the boy became a squire, and at twenty-one, if he were possessed of a rental of £20 a year in land, he made his fast and vigil, and was afterward dubbed knight and given his spurs.

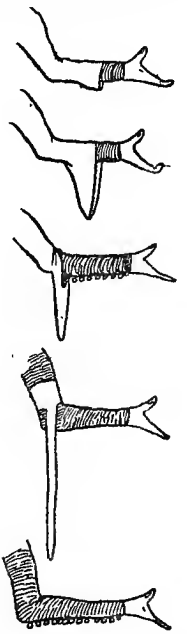
The noteworthy point about a woman of this reign was her hair. The Queen herself wore an elaborate mode of coiffure for that time; she wore a



metal fillet round her head, to which was attached two cases, circular in shape, of gold fretwork, ornamented with precious stones. She wore her hair unplaited, and brought in two parts from the

back of her head, and as far as one can see, pushed into the jewelled cases.

The most general form of hair-dressing was an excess on the mode of the previous reign, a richness of jewel-work, an abundance of gold wire. It was usual to divide the hair into two plaits, and arrange these on either side of the face, holding them in their place by means of a fillet; they might be worn folded straight up by the face, or at an angle, but they were never left hanging; if hair was left loose it was not plaited, but flowing.



The gorget, or throat cloth, was still in general use, and it was attached to the hair by very elaborate-headed pins. Sometimes the hair, dressed with the gorget, was divided into four plaits, two on either side of the face, and fastened horizontally.

The wimple of silk or linen was very generally worn. A caul of gold net came into fashion, but not until the end of the reign. The ladies were

great upon hunting and hawking, and this must have been a convenient fashion to keep the hair in order. Some wore a white silk or linen cap, so shaped as to include and cover the two side-plaits and combine a gorget and wimple in one. Pointed frontals of pearls were worn across the forehead,

and fillets of silk or linen were so tied that long ends hung down the back.

Yellow hair was much esteemed, and ladies who were not favoured by Nature, brought saffron to their aid, and by such efforts brought Nature into line with Art.

There was the general custom of wearing the surcoat in imitation of the men, a garment I have

described frequently—a slightly-fitting garment without sleeves—you will see how this grew later into a gorgeous affair. These surcoats were sometimes of fine cloth of gold covered with an intricate, delicate pattern in which beasts, birds, and foliage mingled in arabesque. Under this surcoat was a plainer, better-fitting garment, made sometimes of the barred and rayed material so common to the men, or of velvet, cloth, or silk, in plain colours, green and red being then very favourite; ermines and many other furs were used to border these gowns. Sometimes you may see that this gown had sleeves short at the elbow, exposing a different coloured under-sleeve, buttoned from elbow to wrist; at other times—in fact, among all fashionable persons—the curious fashion of the tippet, or long streamer, was worn. I have carefully described this fashion in the previous chapter.

The plain gown with tight sleeves was most in use, and the skirts of this gown were very voluminous, and had either pockets or holes in the front of them; the holes enabled the wearer to reach the purse hanging from a girdle which encircled the

waist of the under-dress. These gowns were generally buttoned in front, from neck to waist, or they were laced.

They also wore a heavier gown which reached just below the knee, showing the skirts of the under-gown; the heavy gowns were often fur-lined, and had loose wide sleeves to the elbow.

There was at this time a curious fur or cloth cape in use, longer behind than in front—in fact, it varied with the taste of the owner. It was cut in even scallops all round; I say even to show that they were sewn-edged, not jagged and rough-edged. Any pair of these scallops might be longer than any other pair. Ladies wore these capes for hunting, and ornamented the ends with bells.

The shoes of the women were not very exaggerated in length, but, as a rule, fitted well to the foot and came out in a slight point. You may use for this reign shoes buckled across the instep, laced at the side, or buttoned up the front.

For riding and sport the ladies wore the hood, and sometimes a broad round hat over it, or the peaked hat. The countrywoman wore an ill-fitting gown with tight sleeves, an apron, and an open hood.

Imagine London in the year of the third great pestilence, 1369. It is October, and the worst of

the pestilence is over; John Chichester, the Mayor, is riding through the streets about some great affairs; many knights and ladies pass by. It is raining hard after the long drought of the summer, but, despite the rain, many citizens are abroad to see the doings in the City, and one may see the bright parti-coloured clothes of the lords and ladies, and here and there, as a cloak is blown back, a glimpse of rich-patterned cloth of gold.

Perhaps Will Langland—Long Will—a gaunt man of thirty-seven, is brushing past a young man of twenty-nine, Chaucer, going to his work.

Silk dresses and frieze gowns, velvet and home-spun, hurry along as the rain falls more heavily, and after a while the street becomes quite deserted. Then nothing but the dreary monotony of the rain falling from the gables will come to the room of the knight's lady as she lies sick of small-pox. John de Gaddesden, the King's doctor, has prescribed for her that she must lie clothed in scarlet red in a room of that colour, with bed-hangings of that same colour, and so she must lie, without much comfort, while the raindrops, falling down the wide chimney, drip on the logs in the fire and make them hiss.

RICHARD THE SECOND

Reigned twenty-two years: 1377—1399.
Born 1366. Married, 1381, Anne of Bohemia;
1395, Isabella of France.

THE MEN

THE King himself was a leader of fashion; he had by grace of Nature the form, face, and manner which go to make a dandy. The nobles followed the King; the merchants followed the nobles after their kind; the peasants were still clothed in the simplest of garments, having retained the Norman tunic with the sleeves pushed back over the wrist, kept the loose boots and straw gaiters, and showed the improvement in their class by the innovation of gloves made as a thumb with a pouch for the fingers, and pouches for money of cloth and leather hung on a leather belt. This proved the peasant to be a man of some substance by need of his wallet. Everyone wore the chaperon—a cap and cape combined.

We have now arrived at the reign which made such a difference to the labourer and workman—such as the blacksmith and miller—and in consequence altered and improved the character of his clothes. The poll-tax of 1380 brought the labourer into individual notice for the first time, and thus arose the free labourer in England and the first labour pamphlets.

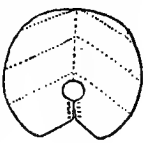
We have two word-pictures of the times of the greatest value, for they show both sides of the coin: the one by the courtly and comfortable Chaucer, the other by Long Will—William Langland, or Piers the Ploughman. Picture the two along the Strand—Long Will singing his dirges for hire, and Chaucer, his hand full of parchments, bustling past.

One must remember that, as always, many people dressed out of the fashion; that many men still wore the cotehardie, a well-fitting garment reaching half-way down the thigh, with tight sleeves coming over the hand, decorated with buttons under the sleeve from the elbow to the little finger. This garment had a belt, which was placed round the hips; and this was adorned in many ways: principally it was composed of square

pieces of metal joined together, either of silver, or enamel in copper, or of gold set with precious stones.

The cotehardie was generally made of a pied cloth in horizontal or diagonal bars, in silk or other rich fabric. With this garment the chaperon (to be more fully described) was worn as a hood; the legs were in tights, and the feet in pointed shoes a little longer than the foot. A pouch or wallet depended from the belt, and a sheath containing two daggers, an anelace, and a misericorde. The pouch was a very rich affair, often of stamped gilded leather or sewn velvet—ornamented, in fact, according to the purse of the wearer. In winter such a man as he of the cotehardie would wear an overcoat with an attached hood. This coat was made in various forms: one form with wide sleeves the same width all the way down, under which were slits in the coat to enable the wearer to place his hands inside, as in the modern Raglan coat-

pocket. Another form was made very loose and without sleeves, but with the same slits at the side; it was buckled round the waist on occasion by a broad leather belt, very plain. The common heavy travelling-coat was made in this way, and it was only the very fashionable who wore the houppelande for riding or travelling. Sometimes such a man would wear in winter about the town a cloak fastened over the right shoulder with three or four buttons, leaving the right arm free; such a cloak is seen in the brass of Robert Attelathe, Mayor of Lynn.



In travelling, our gentleman would wear, often in addition to his chaperon, a peaked hat of cloth, high in the crown, with a brim turned up all round, ending in a long peak in front—the same hat that we always associate with Dick Whittington.

His gloves would be of leather, often ornamented with designs on the back, or, if he were a knight, with his badge.

On this occasion he would wear his sword in a baldric, a long belt over his right shoulder and under his left arm, from which hung also his

daggers. Although I am not dealing even with personal arms, one must remember, in representing these people, that daggers were almost as necessary a part of dress as boots or shoes, and that personal comfort often depended upon a skilful use of that natty weapon; the misericorde was used to give the *coup de grâce.*

The farmer in harvest-time wore, if he did not wear a hood, a peaked hat or a round, large-brimmed straw hat.

We may now arrive at the fashionable man, whose eccentricities in clothes were the object of much comment. How the houppelande or peliçon actually was originated I do not know, but it came about that men suddenly began to clothe themselves in this voluminous and awkward garment. It was a long loose-fitting robe, made to fit on the shoulders only, having very long loose sleeves, varying according to the whim of the owner. These sleeves were

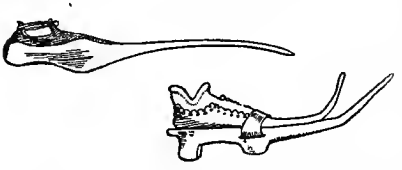
cut at the edges into the forms of leaves or other designs, and were lined, as the houppelande, with fur or silk. It will be seen that such a garment to suit all weathers and temperatures must be made of various materials and lined accordingly. These materials were almost invariably powdered with badges or some other device, sometimes with a flowing pattern embracing an heraldic design or motto. The sleeves turned back disclosed the sleeve of a cotehardie underneath, with the little buttons running from the elbow to the first knuckle of the little finger. The houppelande had a very high collar, coming well up to the middle of the back of the head; it was buttoned up to the chin in front, and the collar was often turned down half-way, the two top buttons being left undone. It was fastened about the middle by a thin leather belt, very long; this was buckled, and the long end turned under and brought over to hang down; the end was ornamented with many devices—figures of saints, heraldic figures, or other ornaments. Sometimes the entire belt was sewn with small devices in precious metal or enamels.

Now, to be in the height of fashion, one either wore the houppelande extremely long in the skirt

or extremely short—so short, in fact, as to leave but a frill of it remaining below the waist—leaving the sleeves still their abnormal length. Pretty fads, as tying a dagger round the neck, or allowing it to hang low between the legs, or placing it in the small of the back, were much in vogue.

Every form of beard or moustache was used, and the hair was worn long to the nape of the neck. By the dandy it was elaborately pressed and curled at the ends. Bands of real or artificial flowers encircled the heads of the dandies, the artificial flowers made in enamels or gold. Rings were worn of great size on thumb and finger; long staffs with elaborate heads were carried.

Under the houppelande was the skirt and the cotehardie of thin material, and on the legs hose,



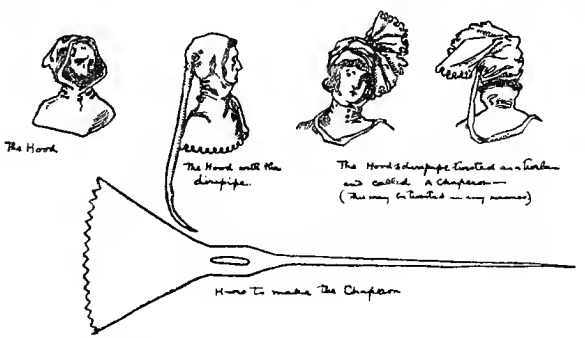
pied or powdered, made of silk or cloth cut to the form and sewn.

The shoes were of great length, with long points; rarely we find examples of the absurd fashion of wearing the points so long that they were tied back to the knees, but often they were so long that the points came out 6 inches beyond

the toe. They were made of every material, sewn with pearls on cloth or velvet, stamped with gold on leather, or the leather raised. The toes were sometimes stuffed hard, sometimes allowed to hang limp.

For walking in the streets high clogs of wood were used, made with long pointed ends to support the shoes.

I may add that the hose were gartered below the knee to hold them taut with rich garters, but if a

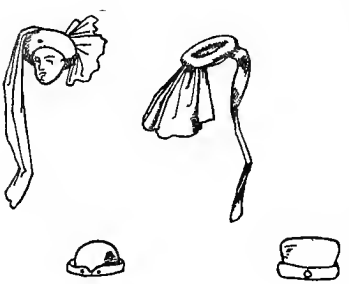


man were a Garter Knight he wore but the garter of his Order.

Much in favour with this court of gallants were rich chains about the neck, having for pendant their badge or some saint's figure in gold or silver.

Now we come to the most interesting and

universal fashion of wearing the chaperon, which I am anxious to show in its various stages. It began with a cape and a hood worn separately; these were joined for convenience so that a man might put on both at once. This fashion held for many years, and then the fashionable man in search of novelty caused the peak of the hood to be lengthened until it grew to reach to his feet. Then he cast about for a fresh mode for his head-wear,



and so he twisted the whole affair about his head, leaving the end of the cape, which was jagged at the edge, protruding like a cockscomb. Time went on, and he avoided the trouble of tying this himself, so he had the hat made up all ready tied, much in the manner of a turban. Finally, the chaperon grew into disuse, and it remains to-day a curious reminder in the cockade worn by coachmen (it is almost a replica in miniature, with the round twist and the jagged edge sticking up above the hat) and on the cloaks of the Knights of the Garter, where it is

carefully made, and forms a cape on the right shoulder, and in the present head-dress of the French lawyer, a relic of the Middle Ages.

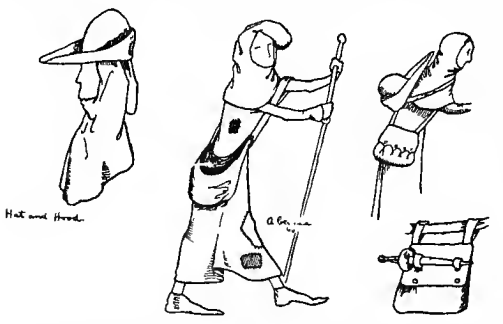
The chains worn about the neck remain as badges of office in Mayors and Judges and in various Orders.

The button worn by the members of the Legion of Honour and other foreign Orders is, I believe, an idea resulting from the cockade, which, of course, was at the beginning the chaperon in the colours of the servant's lord.

When one knows a custom so well, one is apt to leave out many things in describing it. For example, the houppelande was open from the bottom of the skirt to the knee in front or at the side, and this opening was often cut or jagged into shapes; also it was open all the way up the side of the leg, and from the neck to the breast, and buttoned over.

I have not remarked on the jester, a member of many households, who wore an exaggeration of the prevalent costume, to which bells were attached at all points.

So was much good cloth wasted in vanity, and much excellent time spent upon superfluities, to the harm of the people; perhaps useful enough to please the eye, which must have been regaled with all these men in wonderful colours, strutting peacockwise.



The poor peasant, who found cloth becoming very dear, cared not one jot or tittle for the feast of the eye, feeling a certain unreasonable hunger elsewhere.

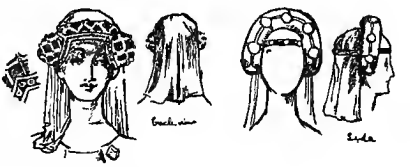
And so over the wardrobe of Dandy Richard stepped Henry, backed by the people.

THE WOMEN

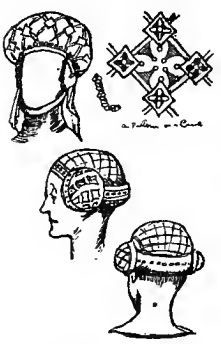
If ever women were led by the nose by the demon of fashion it was at this time. Not only were their clothes ill-suited to them, but they abused that crowning glory, their hair.

No doubt a charming woman is always charming,

be she dressed by woad or worth; but to be captivating with your eyebrows plucked out, and with the hair that grows so prettily low on the back of the neck shaved away—was it possible? I expect it was.



The days of high hennins was yet to come; the day of simple hair-dressing was nearly dead, and in the interval were all the arts of the cunning devoted to the guimpe, the gorgières, the mentonnières, the voluminous escoffions.



At this time the lady wore her hair long and hanging freely over her shoulders; her brows were encircled by a chaplet, or chapel of flowers, real or artificial, or by a crown or plain circlet of gold; or she tucked all her hair away under a tight caul, a bag of gold net enriched with precious stones. To dress hair in this manner it was first necessary to plait it in tight plaits and bind them round the head, then to cover this with a wimple, which fell over the back of the neck, and

over this to place the caul, or, as it was sometimes called, the dorelet. Now and again the caul was worn without the wimple, and this left the back of the neck exposed; from this all the hair was plucked.

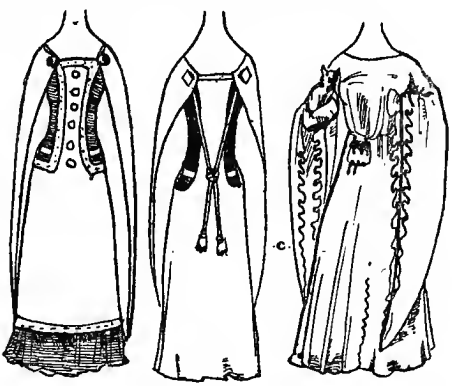
For outdoor exercises the lady would wear the chaperon (explained in the previous chapter), and upon this the peaked hat.

The poorer woman wore always the hood, the wimple tied under the chin, or plain plaited hair.

One must remember always that the advance of costume only affected the upper classes in the towns, and that the knight's lady in the country was often fifty years behind the times in her gowns. As an instance of this I give the fur tippet hung with bells, used when hawking.

In the early part of the reign the cotehardie was the universal woman's garment. It was made in two ways: the one a simple, well-fitting garment, skirts and bodice in one, buttoned

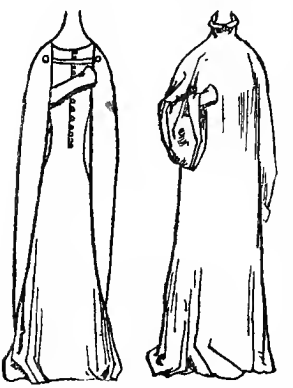
in front, with neck well open, the skirts ample and long, the sleeves over the hands to the first joints of the fingers, and ornamented with buttons from the elbow to the little finger—this was the general form of the garment for all degrees of rank. The lady enriched this with a belt like a man's, narrow in width round the waist with hanging end, or broad round the hips and richly ornamented. The other form of cotehardie was exactly as the man's, ending short below the hips, under which was worn the petticoat.



The winter addition to these was the surcoat (as usually worn by a knight over his armour); this was often lined with fur. The surcoat was a long garment without sleeves, and with a split down the sides from the shoulder to the top of the thigh; through this split was seen the cotehardie and the hip-belt. The edges were trimmed with fur, and very fre-

quently ornamental buttons were worn down the front.

Over the shoulders was the cloak, left open in front, and fastened by means of a cord of rich substance passing through two loops in the backs of large ornamental studs; this cord was, as a rule, knotted at the waist, the ends hanging down as tassels.



Later in the reign, when the second Queen of Richard had brought over many rich fashions, the ladies adopted the houppelande, with its heavy collar and wide, hanging sleeves. Every lady and most women carried a purse in the hand or on the girdle, ornamented according to their station.

The merchant's wife wore, in common with her maids, a white apron. The child who was spinning a peg-top in the street was simply dressed in a short-skirted cotehardie.

For riding and sport the woman was dressed almost exactly as a man—with houppelande or

A WOMAN OF THE TIME OF RICHARD II.
(1377—1399)

HER loose surcoat is cut away to show her underdress. Her hair is completely hidden by her jewelled caul.


D.C.C.

heavy cloak buttoned on the right shoulder, hawking-glove on her left hand with a bell or metal ball depending from it. She wore boots laced up at the side, or long boots of soft leather fastened with hook and eye; shoes like a man's, but not so pointed and extreme. Sometimes for riding a big round hat was worn over a hood.

In many cases the dresses were powdered with the monogram of the Blessed Virgin, with badges of the family or some small device, or they were ornamented with a simple flowing pattern, or were plain.

All the fripperies of fashion lay in pins for the wimple, the head made as a figure of a patron saint; or girdles rich with precious stones; or mirror-cases on whose ivory fronts were carved the Castle of Love, or hunting scenes, or Calvary. The clasps of purses were rich in design, and rings of every kind were worn on every finger and upon the thumb. Charms against evil were hung about the neck or sewn into the clothes. No matter who wrote, passed, and practised the many sumptuary laws, still, one may know it to have been frequent for persons owning less than £20 a year to wear gold and silver ornaments,

although expressly forbidden, and ladies of a lower estate than wives of knights-banneret wore cloth of gold and velvet, and gowns that reached and trailed upon the ground, while their husbands braved it in ermine and marten-lined sleeves which swept the road.

The custom of wearing crowns was common to all people of rank, as heraldic distinction of crowns did not commence until the sixteenth century.

What a magnificent time for colour was this reign!—the rich houppelandes, the furs, the long-piked shoes with pearls and gold upon them, the massive chains about men's necks; ladies whose heads shone with rich caps and cauls of pearl-embroidered gold, the rich-sheathed baselard stuck in the girdle or hanging from it on a silver chain. Even the poor begging friar was touched by all this finery, and, forgetful of the rules of Saint Francis, he made great haste to convert his alms into a furred cote 'cutted to the knee and quaintly buttoned, hose in hard weather fastened at the ankle, and buckled shoes.'

Imagine that amazing woman the Wife of Bath, in her great hat and pound-weight kerchief; the carpenter's wife in her gored apron, at her girdle

a purse of leather hanging, decorated with silk tassels and buttons of metal.

It is almost impossible to describe clearly the head-dresses—the great gold net bags which encased the hair—for they were ornamented in such different ways, always, or nearly always, following some pattern in diaper in contrast to the patterns which came later when the design followed such lines as are formed by wire-netting, while later still the connecting-thread of the patterns was done away with and the inside decoration alone remained.

Well, Richard the King no longer can whistle to Matthew, his favourite greyhound, and Anne the Queen lies stately in the Abbey at Westminster without solace of her little lap-dog; but we are not all modern in our ways, and ladies hang charms about them, from scarabs to queer evil eye coral hands, from silver shoes to month-stones. Crowns of flowers have been worn and crowns of jewels too, just as men and women wore them then, except on Fridays and the eves of fêtes.

These things we do, and other ancient things beside, but let us hope that Fashion has lost her cruel mood, and deems it wise to leave our ladies' eyebrows where they be, nor schemes to inspire

her faithful devotees with mad desires to hide their hair and shave their napes.

The crinoline is threatened—let it come; sandals are here, with short hair and the simple life, but leave me, I pray thee, royal dame, an eyebrow on my lady, if only to give occupation to the love-lorn sonneteer.

THE END OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

Chaucer.

In the last year of the fourteenth century there were still living two men whose voices have made the century live for us. One of them —Chaucer—remains to-day the father of English poetry, the forerunner of Shakespeare; the other —Gower—less known to most of us, was the author of three long poems—'Speculum Meditantis,' in French; 'Vox Clamantis,' in Latin 'Confessio Amantis,' in English. Boccaccio had written his 'Decameron,' and it was this method of writing a series of poems or stories by means of connecting-links of narrative that should run through the series, that inspired the form of the 'Confessio Amantis' and the 'Canterbury Tales'; indeed, many stories in both of these works are retold out of the 'Decameron.'

Gower wrote of his age as a man giving advice, philosophically; he did not attempt character studies, but framed his poems as narratives with morals fit for application to his times.

Chaucer drew his characters clearly—so clearly that they have become as living as have Uncle Toby or Mrs. Gamp—symbolic people, embracing a type of national character.

A third writer—Langland—pictured his age from the poor man's point of view, and the three writers, together with the artist of the Louttrell Psalter, bring the age most vividly to our eyes.

Of course, in these days of hasty work, it seems hardly feasible to suggest that artists who would illustrate these times should read the works of these three men, and go to the British Museum to look at the Psalter; but any writer must do this, and can do this, considering that the works of the poets are cheap to obtain and the British British Museum is free to all.

Anyone wishing to picture these times will find that Chaucer has written very carefully of the costume of his Pilgrims. They will find the pith of the costume in this book of mine; but since no book is complete in every sense, they should see for

themselves how men of the day drew the costume they saw about them. It will give them a sense of the spirit of the age which so many modern drawings lack.

I give you Gower's picture of an exquisite; no words of mine could show so well the manner of the man:

'And therof thenketh he but a lite,
For all his lust is to delite
In newé thingés, proude and veine,
Als ferforth as he may atteine.
I trowe, if that he mighté make
His body newe, he woldé take
A newé form and leve his olde.
For what thing that he may behold
The which to common use is straunge,
Anone his oldé guisé chaunge
He woll, and fallé therupon
Lich unto the camelion,
Whiche upon every sondry hewe
That he beholt he moté newe
His coloun; and thus unavised
Full ofté time he stand desguised.
More jolif than the brid in Maie,
He maketh him ever fressh and gaie
And doth all his array desguise,
So that of him the newé guise
Of lusty folke all other take.'

Now, if I have described the costume of these times clearly—and I think I have done so—these lines should conjure up a gay fellow, with his many changes of dress. If the vision fails, then allow me to say that you are at fault, and have taken no pains with the description. Because the coloured drawing to the chapter of Richard II. shows a long houppelande and a chaperon tied in a certain way, you will very possibly forget that this dandy would have also a short houppelande, differently jagged sleeves, more ruffle about the twisting of his chaperon, more curve to the points of his shoes.

You may see the image of Gower for yourself in St. Mary Overies Church, now called St. Saviour's, on the Southwark side of London Bridge. He is dressed in his sober black, his head resting upon his three books.

In 1397 Gower retired from active life, and resigned his Rectory of Great Braxted, Essex; he was seventy years of age, and at that age he married Agnes Groundolf in a chapel of his own under the rooms where he lived in the Priory of St. Mary Overies.

In 1400 his friend Chaucer died and Gower went blind. He died in 1408.

Chaucer, whose eyes saw England in her great-

ness after the Battle of Crecy in 1346, and in her pitiful state at the downfall of Richard II., saw such a pageant of clothes pass before him that, in describing those wonderful national types, his Canterbury Pilgrims, he marks each one with some hint of array that we may know what manner of habit was proper to them. Here, then, is a list of the clothes he pictured them as wearing:

THE KNIGHT

wears a fustian doublet, all rust-stained by his coat of mail. It is interesting to note how old-fashioned is the character of this 'verray parfit gentil knight,' for he belongs more rightly to the chivalrous time of the first half of Edward III.'s reign rather than to the less gentle time of Richard.

THE SQUIRE.

His locks were curled, 'as they were leyed in presse.' His short gown with

wide sleeves was covered with embroidery of red and white flowers.

The Yeoman

is in a coat and hood of green. He has a sheaf of peacock arrows in his belt; across his shoulder is a green baldrick to carry a horn. There is a figure of St. Christopher in silver hanging on his breast.

The Prioress

is in a handsome cloak; she wears coral beads gauded with green, and a brooch of gold—

> 'On which was first write a-crowned A,
> And after, "Amor vincit omnia."'

The Monk

wears his gown, but has his sleeves trimmed with gray squirrel. To fasten his hood he has a curious gold pin, wrought at the greater end with a love-knot.

The Friar

has his cape stuck full of knives and pins 'for to yeven faire wyves.'

The Merchant

is in a motley of colours—parti-coloured. His beard is forked; upon his head is a Flaun-

derish beaver hat. His boots are elegantly clasped.

THE CLERK

wears a threadbare tunic.

THE MAN OF LAW

is in a coat of parti-colours, his belt of silk with small metal bars on it.

THE FRANKELEYN OR COUNTRY GENTLEMAN

has a white silk purse and a two-edged dagger, or akelace, at his girdle.

'Then come the HABERDASHER, the CARPENTER, the WEAVER, the DYER, and the TAPESTRY WORKER, all in the livery of their companies. They all carry pouches, girdles, and knives, mounted in silver.'

THE SHIPMAN

is in a gown of falding (a coarse cloth), reaching to his knees. A dagger is under his arm, on a lace hanging round his neck.

THE DOCTOR

wears a gown of red and blue (pers 'was a blue cloth) lined with taffeta and sendal.

THE WIFE OF BATH.

Her wimples of fine linen—

'I dorste swere they weyeden ten pound
That on a Sonday were upon hir heed.'

Her hose was of fine scarlet red; her shoes were moist and new. Her hat was as broad as a buckler, and she wore a foot-mantle about her hips.

THE PLOUGHMAN

wears a tabard, a loose smock without sleeves.

THE REVE OR STEWARD

wears a long surcoat of blue cloth (pers).

THE SOMNOUR

(an officer who summoned persons before the ecclesiastical courts) wears on his head a garland—'as greet as it were for an ale-stake.'

THE PARDONER

has long yellow hair falling about his shoulders; his hood is turned back, and he wears a tall cap, on which is sewn a Vernicle. This is the handkerchief of St. Veronica on which there was an impression of our Lord's face.

This completes the list of Pilgrims, but it will be useful to give a few more descriptions of dress as described by Chaucer. The Carpenter's wife in the Miller's Tale is described:

'Fair was this yonge wyf, and ther-with-al
As any wesele hir body gent (slim) and small.
A ceynt (belt) she werede barred al of silk,
A barneclooth (apron) eek as whyt as morne milk
Upon hir lendes (loins), ful of many a gore.
Whyt was hir smok and brouded al before
And eek behinde, on hir coler aboute,
Of col-blak silk, within and eek withoute.
The tapes of his whyte voluper (a cap)
Were of the same suyte—of hir coler;
Hir filet broad of silk, and set ful hye.

* * * * *

And by hir girdel heeng a purs of lether
Tasseld with silk and perked with latoun (a compound of copper and zinc).

* * * * *

A brooch she bare upon hir lowe coler,
As broad as is the bos of a buckler.
Her shoes were laced on hir legges hye.'

Here also, from the Parson's Tale, is a sermon against the vain clothing of his time, that will serve to show how you may best paint this age, and to what excess of imagination you may run. I have reduced the wording into more modern English:

'As to the first sin, that is in superfluitee of clothing, which that maketh it so dere, to the harm of the people; not only the cost of embroidering, the elaborate endenting or barring, ornamenting with waved lines, paling, winding, or bending, and semblable waste of cloth in vanity; but there is also costly furring in their gowns, so muche pounching of chisels to make holes, so much dagging of shears; forthwith the superfluity in the length of the foresaid gowns, trailing in the dung and the mire, on horse and eek on foot, as well of man as of woman, that all this trailing is verily as in effect wasted, consumed, threadbare, and rotten with dung, rather than it is given to the poor; to great damage of the aforesaid poor folk.

'Upon the other side, to speak of the horrible disordinate scantiness of clothing, as be this cutted

sloppes or hainselins (short jackets), that through their shortness do not cover the shameful members of man, to wicked intent.'

After this, the good Parson, rising to a magnificent torrent of wrathful words, makes use of such homely expressions that should move the hearts of his hearers—words which, in our day, are not seemly to our artificial and refined palates.

Further, Chaucer remarks upon the devices of love-knots upon clothes, which he calls 'amorettes'; on trimmed clothes, as being 'apyked'; on nearly all the fads and fashions of his time.

It is to Chaucer, and such pictures as he presents, that our minds turn when we think vaguely of the Middle Ages, and it is worth our careful study, if we wish to appreciate the times to the full, to read, no matter the hard spelling, the 'Vision of Piers the Plowman,' by Langland.

I have drawn a few of the Pilgrims, in order to show that they may be reconstructed by reading the chapters on the fourteenth century.

HENRY THE FOURTH

Reigned fourteen years: 1399—1413.
Born 1366. Married, 1380, Mary de Bohun;
1403, Joan of Navarre.

THE MEN AND WOMEN

THE reign opens sombrely enough—Richard in prison, and twenty-five suits of cloth of gold left, among other of his butterfly raiment, in Haverford Castle.

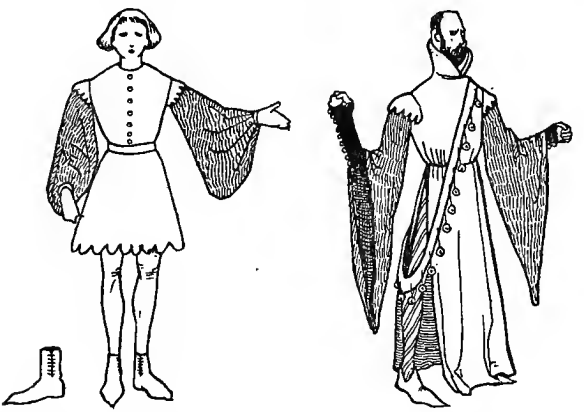
We are still in the age of the houppelande, the time of cut edges, jagging, big sleeves and trailing gowns. Our fine gentlemen take the air in the long loose gown, or the short edition of the same with the skirts cut from it. They have invented, or the tailor has invented, or necessity has contrived, a new sleeve. It is a bag sleeve, very full and fine, enormous at the elbow, tight at the wrist, where it may fall over the hand in a wide cuff with dagged edges, or it may end in a plain band.

A MAN AND WOMAN OF THE TIME OF HENRY IV. (1399—1413)

VERY little change in dress; the man in the loose gown called the houppelande. The woman also in a houppelande.

Let us take six gentlemen met together to learn the old thirteenth-century part-song, the round entitled 'Sumer is icumen in.'

The first, maybe, is in the high-collared houppelande with the long skirts; his sleeves are of a different colour to his gown, and are fastened to it under cut epaulettes at his shoulders; he wears



a baldrick, hung with bells, over his shoulder; his houppelande is split on one side to show his parti-coloured hose beyond his knee; his shoes are long and very pointed; his hair is cut short, and he wears a twisted roll of stuff round his head.

The second is in the latest mode; he wears the

voluminous sleeves which end in a plain band at his wrist, and these sleeves are of a different colour to his houppelande, the skirts of which are cut short at the knee, and then are cut into neat dags. This garment is not so full as that of the first gentleman, which is gathered in at the waist by a long-tongued belt, but is buttoned down the front to the waist and is full in the skirt; also it has no collar. This man wears his hair long and curled at the nape of his neck.

A third of these gentlemen, a big burly man, is in a very short tunic with wide sleeves; his tights are of two colours, his left leg red, his right blue. Over his tunic he wears a quilted waistcoast, the collar and armholes of which are trimmed with fur.

A fourth wears a loose houppelande, one half of which is blue and the other half black; it is buttoned from throat to foot; the

sleeves are wide. His hair is long, and his beard is brushed into two points.

The fifth gentleman wears a houppelande of middle length, with a very high collar buttoned up the neck, the two top buttons being undone; the top of the collar rolls over. He has the epaulette, but instead of showing the very full bag sleeves he shows a little loose sleeve to the elbow, and a tight sleeve from the elbow to the hand, where it forms a cuff. He wears a very new-fashioned cap like a stiff sugar-bag, with the top lopping over.

The sixth and last of this group is wearing an unbound houppelande —that is, he wears no belt. He wears a plain hood which is over his head, and a soft, loose, peaked hat.

'Sumer is icumen in,' the six sing out, and the

shepherd, who can hear them from outside, is considering whether he can play the air upon his pipe. He is dressed in a loose tunic, a hood, and a wide-brimmed straw hat; his pipe is stuck in his belt.

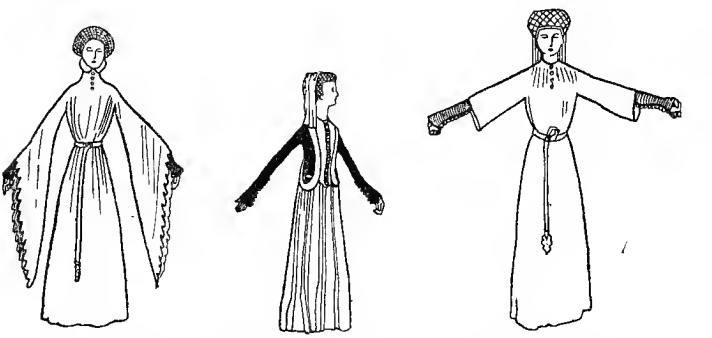
Let us suppose that the wives of the six gentlemen are seated listening to the manly voices of their lords.

The first wears a dress of blue, which is laced from the opening to the waist, where the laces

are tied in a neat bow and hang down. Her dress is cut fairly low; it has tight sleeves which come over her hands to the knuckles in tight cuffs. There is a wide border, about a foot and a half, of ermine on the skirt of her dress. She wears a mantle over her shoulders. Her hair is enclosed in a stiff square caul of gold wire over cloth of gold.

The second lady is wearing a houppelande with wide, hanging sleeves all cut at the edge; the cut of this gown is loose, except that it fits across her shoulders; she also wears a caul, from the back of which emerges a linen wimple.

The third lady is in surcoat and cotehardie ; the surcoat has a pleated skirt, and the borders of it are edged thickly with fur ; it is cut low enough at the sides to show a belt over the hips. The cotehardie, of a different colour to the surcoat, has tight sleeves with buttons from elbow to little



finger. This lady has her hair cut short at the nape of her neck, and bound about the brows with a golden circlet.

A fourth wears a very loose houppelande, encircled about the waist with a broad belt, the tongue of which hangs down and has an ornamented end. This houppelande falls in great folds from the neck to the feet, and is gathered into the neck ; it has loose, but not wide, sleeves, falling just below the elbow. The gown is worn over a cotehardie,

the sleeves of which show through the other sleeves, and the skirt of which shows when the gown skirt is gathered up.

The fifth lady also wears a cotehardie with a skirt to it; she wears over it a circular mantle, buttoned by three buttons on the right shoulder, and split from there to the edge on both sides, showing the dress; the front semicircle of the cloak is held to the waist by a belt so that the back hangs loose. Her hair is in a caul.

The sixth is in a very plain dress, tight fitting, buttoned in front, with full skirts. She wears a white linen hood which shows the shape of the caul in which her hair is imprisoned.

So is this queer old round sung, 'Sumer is icumen in.'

Afterwards, perhaps one of these ladies, wishing to get some spite against one of the gentlemen, will ride away in a heavy riding-cloak, the hood over her head and a peaked hat on that, and she will call upon a witch. The witch will answer the rapping at her humble door, and will come out, dressed in a country dress—just an ill-fitting gown and

hood, with some attempt at classical ornament on the gown, or a cloak sewn with the sacred initials thrown over her back. These two will bargain awhile for the price of a leaden image to be made in the likeness of the ill-fated gentleman, or, rather, a rough figure, on which his name will be scratched; then the puppet will be cast into the fire and melted while certain evil charms are spoken, and the malicious accident required to befall him will be spoken aloud for the Devil's private ear. Possibly some woman sought a witch near Evesham in the year 1410, and bought certain intentions against a tailor of that place, Badby by name; for this much is certain: that the tailor was burnt for Lollardy ten years after the first victim for Lollard heresy, William Sawtre.

HENRY THE FIFTH

Reigned nine years: 1413—1422.
Born 1388. Married, 1420, Katherine of France.

THE MEN

I THINK I may call this a transitional period of clothes, for it contains the ragged ends of the time of Richard II. and the old clothes of the time of Henry IV., and it contains the germs of a definite fashion, a marked change which came out of the chrysalis stage, and showed itself in the prosperous butterflies of the sixth Henry's time.

We retain the houppelande, its curtailments, its exaggerations, its high and low collar, its plain or jagged sleeves. We retain the long hair, which

'busheth pleasauntlie,' and the short hair of the previous reign. Also we see the new ideas for the priest-cropped hair and the roundlet hat.

I speak of the men only.

It was as if, in the press of French affairs, man had but time to ransack his grandfather's and his father's chests, and from thence to pull out a garment or two at a venture. If the garment was a little worn in the upper part of the sleeve, he had a slash made there, and embroidered it round. If the baldrick hung with bells was worn out in parts, he cut those pieces away and turned the baldrick into a belt. If the skirts of the houppelande were sadly frayed at the edge, enter Scissors again to cut them off short; perhaps the sleeves were good — well, leave them on; perhaps the skirts were good and the sleeves soiled—well, cut out the sleeves and pop in some of his father's bag sleeves. Mind you, my honest gentleman had trouble brewing: no sooner had he left the wars in Normandy and Guienne than the siege of Harfleur loomed to his vision, and after that Agincourt—Agincourt, where unarmoured men prevailed over mailed knights at the odds of six to one; Agincourt, where archers beat the great knights of

France on open ground! Hear them hammer on the French armour with their steel mallets, while the Frenchmen, weighed down with their armour, sank knee-deep in the mud—where we lost 100 men, against the French loss of 10,000!

See the port of Le Havre, with the English army landed there — Henry in his full-sleeved gown, his hair cropped close and shaven round his head from his neck to an inch above his ears, buskins on his feet, for he wore buskins in preference to long boots or pointed shoes. The ships in the harbour are painted in gay colours — red, blue, in stripes, in squares; the sails are sewn with armorial bearings or some device. Some of our gentlemen are wearing open houppelandes over their armour; some wear the stuffed turban on their heads, with a jewelled brooch stuck in it; some wear the sugar-bag cap, which falls to one side; some are hooded, others wear peaked hats. One hears, 'By halidom!' I wonder if all the many, many people who have

A Belt with Bells.

hastily written historical novels of this age, and have peppered them with 'By halidoms,' knew that 'By halidom' means 'By the relics of the saints,' and that an 'harlote' means a man who was a buffoon who told ribald stories?

Still, among all these gentlemen, clothed, as it were, secondhand, we have the fine fellow, the dandy—he to whom dress is a religion, to whom stuffs are sonnets, cuts are lyrical, and tailors are the poets of their age. Such a man will have his tunic neatly pleated, rejecting the chance folds of the easy-fitting houppelande, the folds of which were determined by the buckling of the belt. His folds will be regular and precise, his collar will be very stiff, with a rolled top; his hose will be of two colours, one to each leg, or particoloured. His shoes will match his hose, and be of two colours; his turban hat will be cocked at a jaunty angle; his sleeves will be of a monstrous length and width. He will hang a

The Turban.

A MAN OF THE TIME OF HENRY V.
(1413—1422)

NOTICE the bag cap with a jewel stuck in it.

A WOMAN OF THE TIME OF EDWARD III.
(1327—1377)

You will notice that the woman also wears the tippet on her arm. The gorget is high about her neck, and is held up by pins to her plaited hair.

chain about his neck, and load his fingers with rings. A fellow to him, one of his own kidney, will wear the skirt of his tunic a little longer, and will cause it to be cut up the middle; his sleeves will not be pendant, like drooping wings, but will be swollen like full-blown bagpipes. An inner sleeve, very finely embroidered, will peep under the upper cuff. His collar is done away with, but he wears a little hood with cut edges about his neck; his hair is cropped in the new manner, like a priest's without a tonsure; his hat is of the queer sugar-bag shape, and it flops in a drowsy elegance over the stuffed brim. As for his shoes, they are two fingers long beyond his toes.

We shall see the fashions of the two past reigns hopelessly garbled, cobbled, and stitched together; a sleeve from one, a skirt from another. Men-at-arms in short tunics of leather and quilted waistcoats to wear under their half-armour; beggars in fashions dating from the eleventh century; a great mass of people in undistinguishable attire, looking mostly like voluminous cloaks on spindle legs, or mere bundles of drapery; here and there a sober gentleman in a houppelande of the simplest

kind, with wide skirts reaching to his feet, and the belt with the long tongue about his middle.

The patterns upon the dresses of these people are heraldry contortions — heraldic beasts intertwined in screws and twists of conventional foliage, griffins and black dogs held by floral chains to architectural branches, martlets and salamanders struggling in grotesque bushes, or very elaborate geometrical patterned stuffs.

There is a picture of the Middle Ages which was written by Langland in 'Piers the Plowman' —a picture of an alehouse, where Peronelle of Flanders and Clarice of Cockeslane sit with the hangman of Tyburn and a dozen others. It is a picture of the fourteenth century, but it holds good until the time of Henry VIII., when Skelton, his tutor, describes just such another tavern on the highroad, where some bring wedding-rings to pay their scot of ale, and

> 'Some bryngeth her husband's hood
> Because the ale is good.'

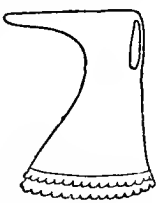
Both accounts are gems of description, both full of that rich, happy, Gothic flavour, that sense of impressionist portraiture, of broad humour,

which distinguishes the drawings in the Loutrell Psalter.

I feel now as if I might be accused of being interesting and of overlaying my history with too much side comment, and I am well aware that convention demands that such books as this shall be as dull as possible; then shall the vulgar rejoice, because they have been trained to believe that dullness and knowledge snore in each other's arms.

The Sugar-bag Cap.

However wholeheartedly you may set about writing a list of clothes attributable to certain dates, there will crop up spirits of the age, who blur the edges of the dates, and give a lifelike semblance to them which carries the facts into the sphere of fiction, and fiction was ever on the side of truth. No story has ever been invented by man but it has been beaten out of time by Nature and the police-courts; no romance has been penned so intricate but fact will supply a more surprising twist to life. But, whereas facts are of necessity bald



A Hood.

and naked things, fiction, which is the wardrobe of fact, will clothe truth in more accustomed guise.

I put before you some true facts of the clothes of this time, clothed in a little coat of facts put fictionally. I write the word 'cloak'; describe to you that such people wore circular cloaks split at one or both sides, on one side to the neck, on the other below the shoulder; of semicircular cloaks, of square cloaks, of oblong cloaks, all of which were worn (I speak of these, and you may cut them out with some thought); but I wish to do more than that—I wish to give you a gleam of the spirit in which the cloaks were worn. A cloak will partake of the very soul and conscience of its owner; become draggle-tailed, flaunting, effeminate, masterful, pompous, or dignified. Trousers, I think, of all the garments of men, fail most to show the state of his soul; they merely proclaim the qualities of his purse. Cloaks give most the true man, and after that there is much in the cock of a hat and the conduct of a cane.

In later days one might tell what manner of man had called to find you away if he chanced to leave his snuff-box behind. This reasoning is not

finicky, but very profound; accept it in the right spirit.

Now, one more picture of the age.

The rich man at home, dressed, as I say, in his father's finery, with some vague additions of his own, has acquired a sense of luxury. He prefers to dine alone, in a room with a chimney and a fire in it. He can see through a window in the wall by his side into the hall, where his more patriarchal forebears loved to take their meals. The soiled rushes are being swept away, and fresh herbs and rushes strewn in their place; on these mattresses will in their turn be placed, on which his household presently will lay them down to sleep.

THE WOMEN

Every time I write the heading 'The Women' to such chapters as these, I feel that such threadbare cloak of chivalry as I may pin about my shoulders is in danger of slipping off.

Should I write 'The Ladies'? But although all ladies are women, not all women are ladies, and as it is far finer to be a sweet woman than a great dame, I will adhere to my original heading, 'The Women.'

However, in the remote ages of which I now write, the ladies were dressed and the women wore clothes, which is a subtle distinction. I dare not bring my reasoning up to the present day.

As I said in my last chapter, this was an age of medley—of this and that wardrobe flung open, and old fashions renovated or carried on. Fashion, that elusive goddess, changes her moods and modes with such a quiet swiftness that she leaves us breathless and far behind, with a bundle of silks and velvets in our arms.

How is a fashion born? Who mothers it? Who nurses it to fame, and in whose arms does it die? High collar, low collar, short hair, long hair, boot, buskin, shoe — who wore you first? Who last condemned you to the World's Great Rag Market of Forgotten Fads?

Now this, I have said, was a transitional age, but I cannot begin to say who was the first great dame to crown her head with horns, and who the last to forsake the jewelled caul. It is only on rare occasions that the decisive step can be traced to any one person or group of persons: Charles II. and his frock-coat, Brummell and his starched stock, are finger-posts on Fashion's highroad, but they

are not quite true guides. Charles was recommended to the coat, and I think the mist of soap and warm water that enshrines Brummell as the Apostle of Cleanliness blurs also the mirror of truth. It does not much matter.

No doubt—and here there will be readers the first to correct me and the last to see my point—there are persons living full of curious knowledge who, diving yet more deeply into the dusty crevices of history, could point a finger at the man who first cut his hair in the early fifteenth-century manner, and could write you the name and the dignities of the lady who first crowned her fair head with horns.

For myself, I begin with certainty at Adam and the fig-leaf, and after that I plunge into the world's wardrobe in hopes.

Certain it is that in this reign the close caul grew out of all decent proportions, and swelled into every form of excrescence and protuberance, until in the reign of Henry VI. it towered above the heads of the ladies, and dwarfed the stature of the men.

This curious headgear, the caul, after a modest appearance, as a mere close, gold-work cap, in the

time of Edward III., grew into a stiffer affair in the time of Richard II., but still was little more than a stiff sponge-bag of gold wire and stuff and a little padding; grew still more in the time of Henry IV., and took squarer shapes and stiffer padding; and in the reign of Henry V. it became like a great orange, with a hole cut in it for the face—an orange which covered the ears, was cut straight across the forehead, and bound all round with a stiff jewelled band.

Then came the idea of the horn. Whether some superstitious lady thought that the wearing of horns would keep away the evil eye, or whether it was a mere frivol of some vain Duchess, I do not know.

As this fashion came most vividly into prominence in the following reign, I shall leave a more detailed description of it until that time, letting myself give but a short notice of its more simple forms.

We see the caul grow from its circular shape into two box forms on either side of the head; the uppermost points of the boxes are arranged in horns, whose points are of any length from 4 to 14 inches. The top of this head-dress is covered

with a wimple, which is sometimes stiffened with wires.

There is also a shape something like a fez or a flower-pot, over which a heavy wimple is hung, attached to this shape; outside the wimple are two horns of silk, linen, or stuff—that is, silk bags stuffed to the likeness of horns.

I should say that a true picture of this time would give but few of these very elaborate horn head-dresses, and the mass of women would be wearing the round caul.

The surcoat over the cotehardie is the general wear, but it has more fit about it than formerly; the form of the waist and bust are accentuated by means of a band of heavy gold embroidery, shaped to the figure. The edges of the surcoat are furred somewhat heavily, and the skirt often has a deep border of fur. Sometimes a band of metal ornament runs across the top of the breast and down the centre of the surcoat, coming below the fur edging. The belt over the hips of the cotehardie holds the purse, and often a ballade or a rondel.

You will see a few of the old houppelandes, with

their varieties of sleeve, and in particular that long, loose double sleeve, or, rather, the very long under-sleeve, falling over the hand. This under-sleeve is part of the houppelande.

All the dresses have trains, very full trains, which sweep the ground, and those readers who wish to make such garments must remember to be very generous over the material.

The women commonly wear the semicircular mantle, which they fasten across them by cords running through ornamental brooches.

They wear very rich metal and enamel belts round their hips, the exact ornamentation of which cannot be described here; but it was the ornament of the age, which can easily be discovered.

In the country, of course, simpler garments prevail, and plain surcoats and cotehardies are wrapped in cloaks and mantles of homespun material. The hood has not fallen out of use for women, and the peaked hat surmounts it for riding or rough weather. Ladies wear wooden clogs or sandals besides their shoes, and they have not yet taken to the horns upon their heads; some few of them, the great dames of the counties whose lords have been to London on King's busi-

ness, or returned from France with new ideas, have donned the elaborate business of head-boxes and wires and great wimples.

As one of the ladies rides in the country lanes, she may pass that Augustine convent where Dame Petronilla is spiritual Mother to so many, and may see her in Agincourt year keeping her pig-tally with Nicholas Swon, the swineherd. They may see some of the labourers she hires dressed in the blood-red cloth she has given them, for the dyeing of which she paid 7s. 8d. for 27 ells. The good dame's nuns are very neat; they have an allowance of 6s. 8d. a year for dress.

This is in 1415. No doubt next year my lady, riding through the lanes, will meet some sturdy beggar, who will whine for alms, pleading that he is an old soldier lately from the field of Agincourt.

NOTE

As there is so little real change, for drawings of women's dress see the numerous drawings in previous chapter.

HENRY THE SIXTH

Reigned thirty-nine years: 1422-1461.
Born 1421. Dethroned 1461. Died 1471.
Married, 1446, Margaret of Anjou.

THE MEN

WHAT a reign! Was history ever better dressed?

I never waver between the cardboard figures of the great Elizabethan time and this reign as a monument to lavish display, but if any time should beat this for quaintness, colour, and variety, it is the time of Henry VIII.

Look at the scenes and characters to be dressed: John, Duke of Bedford, the Protector, Joan of Arc, Jack Cade, a hundred other people; Crevant, Verneuil, Orleans, London

Bridge, Ludlow, St. Albans, and a hundred other historical backgrounds.

Yet, in spite of all this, in spite of the fact that Joan of Arc is one of the world's personalities, it is difficult to pick our people out of the tapestries.

Now, you may have noticed that in trying to recreate a period in your mind certain things immediately swing into your vision: it is difficult to think of the Conquest without the Bayeux tapestry; it is difficult to think of the dawn of the sixteenth century without the dreamy, romantic landscapes which back the figures of Giorgione; and it is not easy to think of these people of the Henry VI. period without placing them against conventional tapestry trees, yellow-white castles with red, pepper-pot roofs, grass luxuriant with needlework flowers, and all the other accessories of the art.

The early times are easily imagined in rough surroundings or in open air; knights in armour ride quite comfortably down modern English lanes. Alfred may burn his cakes realistically, and Canute rebuke his courtiers on the beach—these one may see in the round. Elizabeth rides

to Tilbury, Charles II. casts his horoscope, and George rings the bell, each in their proper atmosphere, but the Dark Ages are dark, not only in modes of thought, but in being ages of grotesque, of ornamentation, of anything but realism.

One has, I think, a conventional mind's eye for the times from Edward I. to Richard III., from 1272 to 1485, and it is really more easy for a Chinaman to call up a vision of 604 A.D., when Laot-sen, the Chinese philosopher, was born. Laot-sen, the child-old man, he who was born with white hair, lived till he was eighty-one, and, having had five million followers, went up to heaven on a black buffalo. In China things have changed very little: the costume is much the same, the customs are the same, the attitude towards life has not changed. But here the semicivilized, superstitious, rather dirty, fourteenth and fifteenth century person has gone. Scratch a Russian, they say, and you will see a Tartar ; do the same office by an Englishman, and you may find a hint of the Renaissance under his skin, but no more. The Middle Ages are dead and dust.

We will proceed with that congenial paradox which states that the seat of learning lies in the

head, and so discuss the most distinctive costumery of this time, the roundlet.

Now, the roundlet is one of those things which delight the clothes-hunter or the costume expert.

It is the natural result of a long series of fashions for the head, and its pedigree is free from any impediment or hindrance; it is the great-grandson of the hood, which is derived from a fold in a cloak, which is the beginning of all things.

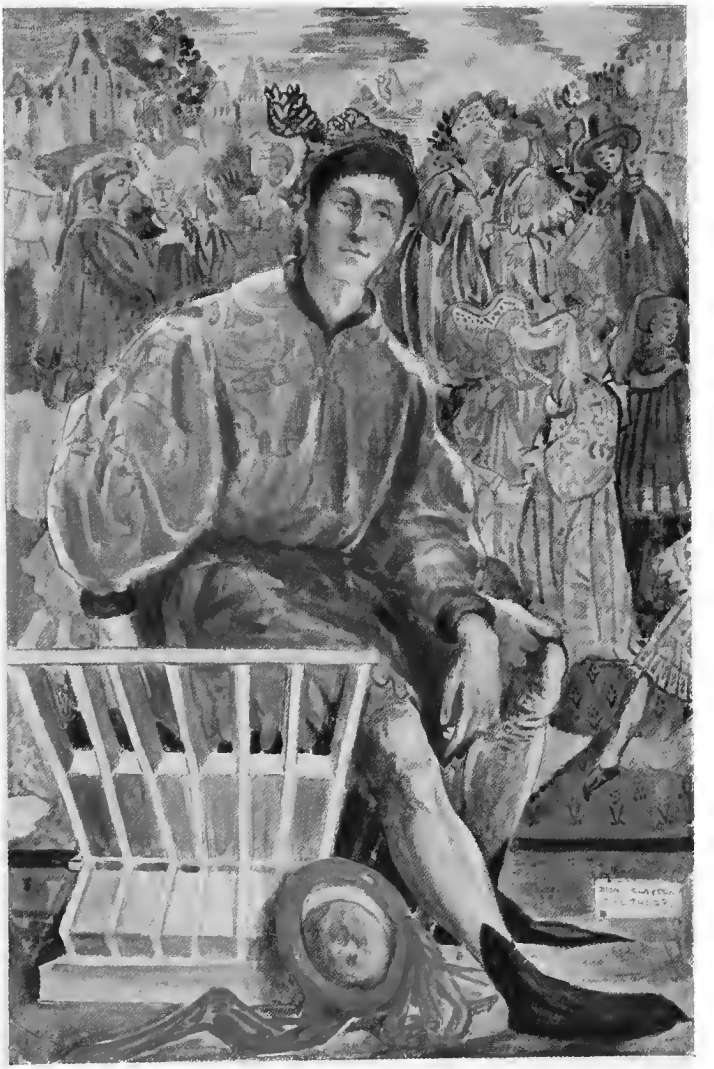
I am about to run the risk of displeasure in repeating to some extent what I have already written about the chaperon, the hood, and the other ancestors and descendants of the roundlet.

A fashion is born, not made. Necessity is the mother of Art, and Art is the father of Invention. A man must cover his head, and if he has a cloak, it is an easy thing in rain or sunshine to pull the folds of the cloak over his head. An ingenious fellow in the East has an idea: he takes his 8 feet —or more—of material; he folds it in half, and

at about a foot and a half, or some such convenient length, he puts several neat and strong stitches joining one point of the folded material. When he wraps this garment about him, leaving the sewn point in the centre of his neck at the back, he finds that he has directed the folds of his coat in such a manner as to form a hood, which he may place on or off his head more conveniently than the plain unsewn length of stuff. The morning sun rises on the sands of Sahara and lights upon the first burnoose. By a simple process in tailoring, some man, who did not care that the peak of his hood should be attached to his cloak, cut his cloth so that the cloak had a hood, the peak of which was separate and so looser, and yet more easy to pull on or off. Now comes a man who was taken by the shape of the hood, but did not require to wear a cloak, so he cut his cloth in such a way that he had a hood and shoulder-cape only. From this to the man who closed the front of the hood from the neck to the edge of the cape is but a quick and quiet step. By now necessity was satisfied and had given birth to art. Man, having admired his face in the still waters of a pool, seeing how the oval framed in the hood vastly became him, sought

A MAN OF THE TIME OF HENRY VI.
(1422—1461)

His hair is cropped over his ears and has a thick fringe on his forehead. Upon the ground is his roundlet, a hat derived from the twisted chaperon of Richard II.'s day. This hat is worn to-day, in miniature, on the shoulder of the Garter robes.



to tickle his vanity and win the approbation of the other sex, so, taking some shears, cut the edge of his cape in scallops and leaves. A more dandified fellow, distressed at the success of his brother's plumage, caused the peak of his hood to be made long.

Need one say more? The long peak grew and grew into the preposterous liripipe which hung down the back from the head to the feet. The dandy spirit of another age, seeing that the liripipe can grow no more, and that the shape of the hood is common and not in the true dandiacal spirit, whips off his hood, and, placing the top of his head where his face was, he twists the liripipe about his head, imprisons part of the cape, and, after a fixing twist, slips the liripipe through part of its twined self and lets the end hang down on one side of his face, while the jagged end of the hood rises or falls like a cockscomb on the other. Cockscomb! there's food for discussion in that—fops, beaux, dandies, coxcombs—surely.

I shall not go into the matter of the hood with two peaks, which was not, I take it, a true child of fashion in the direct line, but a mere cousin—a junior branch at that.

As to the dates on this family tree, the vague, mysterious beginnings B.C.—goodness knows when—in a general way the Fall, the Flood, and the First Crusade, until the time of the First Edward;

the end of the thirteenth century, when the liripipe budded, the time of the Second Edward; the first third of the fourteenth century, when the liripipe was in full flower, the time of the Third Edward; the middle of the fourteenth century, when the liripipe as a liripipe was dying, the time of the Second Richard; the end of the century, when the chaperon became the twisted cockscomb turban. Then, after that, until the twenty-second year of the fifteenth century, when the roundlet was born—those are the dates.

We have arrived by now, quite naturally, at the roundlet. I left you interested at the last phase of the hood, the chaperon so called, twisted up in a fantastical shape on man's head. You must see that the mere process of tying and retying, twisting, coiling and arranging, was tedious in the extreme, especially in stirring times with the

trumpets sounding in England and France. Now what more likely for the artist of the tied hood than to puzzle his brains in order to reach a means by which he could get at the effect without so much labour? Enter invention—enter invention and exit art. With invention, the made-up chaperon sewn so as to look as if it had been tied. There was the twist round the head, the cockscomb, the hanging piece of liripipe. Again this was to be simplified: the twist made into a smooth roll, the skull to be covered by an ordinary cap attached to the roll, the cockscomb converted into a plain piece of cloth or silk, the liripipe to become broader. And the end of this, a little round hat with a heavily-rolled and stuffed brim, pleated drapery hanging over one side and streamer of broad stuff over the other; just such a hat did these people wear, on their heads or slung over their shoulder, being held in the left hand by means of the streamer. There the honourable family of hood came to a green old age, and was, at the end of the fifteenth century, allowed to retire from the world of fashion, and was given a pension and a home, in which home you may still see it—on the shoulders of the Garter robe. Also it has two

more places of honourable distinction—the roundlet is on the Garter robe; the chaperon, with the cut edge, rests as a cockade in the hats of liveried servants, and the minutest member of the family remains in the foreign buttons of honourable Orders.

We have the roundlet, then, for principal headgear in this reign, but we must not forget that the hood is not dead; it is out of the strict realms of fashion, but it is now a practical country garment, or is used for riding in towns. There are also other forms of headwear—tall, conical hats with tall brims of fur, some brims cut or scooped out in places; again, the hood may have a furred edge showing round the face opening; then we see a cap which fits the head, has a long, loose back falling over the neck, and over this is worn a roll or hoop of twisted stuff. Then there is the sugar-loaf hat, like a circus clown's, and there is a broad, flat-brimmed hat with a round top, like

Noah's hat in the popular representations of the Ark.

Besides these, we have the jester's three-peaked hood and one-peaked hood, the cape of which came, divided into points, to the knees, and had arms with bell sleeves.

Let us see what manner of man we have under such hats: almost without exception among the gentlemen we have the priestly hair—that queer, shaved, tonsure-like cut, but without the circular piece cut away from the crown of the head.

The cut of the tunic in the body has little variation; it may be longer or shorter, an inch above or an inch below the knee, but it is on one main principle. It is a loose tunic with a wide neck open in front about a couple or three inches; the skirt is full, and may be cut up on one or both sides; it may be edged with fur or some stuff different to the body of the garment, or it may be jagged, either

in regular small scoops or in long fringe-like jags. The tunic is always belted very low, giving an odd appearance to the men of this time, as it made them look very short in the leg.

The great desire for variety is displayed in the forms of sleeve for this tunic: you may have the ordinary balloon sleeve ending in a stuff roll or fur edge for cuff, or you may have a half-sleeve, very wide indeed, like shoulder-capes, and terminated in the same manner as the bottom of the tunics—that is, fur-edged tunic, fur-edged sleeve, and so on, as described; under this shows the tight sleeve of an undergarment, the collar of which shows above the tunic collar at the neck. The length of these shoulder-cape sleeves varies according to the owner's taste, from small epaulettes to heavy capes below the elbow. There is also a sleeve tight from wrist to below the elbow, and at that point very big and wide, tapering gradually to the shoulder. You will still see one or two high collars rolled over, and there is a distinct continuance of the fashion for long-pointed shoes.

There is an almost new form of overcoat which is really a tunic of the time, unbelted, and with the sleeves cut out; also one with short, but very

full, sleeves, the body very loose; and besides the ordinary forms of square, oblong, and round cloak, there is a circular cloak split up the right side to the base of the biceps, with a round hole in the centre, edged with fur, for the passage of the head.

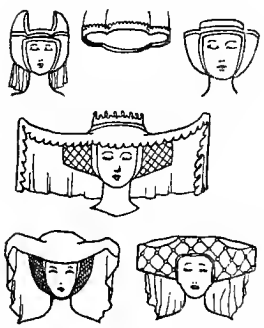
Velvet was in common use for gowns, tunics, and even for bed-clothes, in the place of blankets. It was made in all kinds of beautiful designs, diapered, and raised over a ground of gold or silk, or double-piled, one pile on another of the same colour making the pattern known by the relief.

The massed effect of well-dressed crowds must have been fine and rich in colour—here and there a very rich lady or a magnificent gentleman in pall (the beautiful gold or crimson web, known also as bandekin), the velvets, the silks of marvellous colours, and none too fresh or new. I think that such a gathering differed most strongly from a gathering of to-day by the fact that one is impressed to-day with the new, almost tinny newness, of the people's clothes, and that these other people were

not so extravagant in the number of their dresses as in the quality, so that then one would have seen many old and beautifully-faded velvets and sun-licked silks and rain-improved cloths.

Among all this crowd would pass, in a plain tunic and short shoes, Henry, the ascetic King.

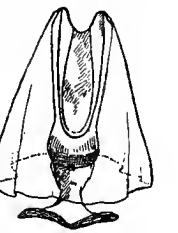
THE WOMEN



One is almost disappointed to find nothing upon the curious subject of horns in 'Sartor Resartus.' Such a flaunting, Jovian spirit, and poetry of abuse as might have been expected from the illustrious and iconoclastic author would have suited me, at this present date, most admirably.

I feel the need of a few thundering German words, or a brass band at the end of my pen, or purple ink in my inkwell, or some fantastic and wholly arresting piece of sensationalism by which to convey to you that you have now stepped into the same world as the Duchess out of 'Alice in Wonderland.'

Look out of your window and see upon the flower-enamelled turf a hundred bundles of vanity taking the air. The heads of these ladies are carried very erect, as are all heads bearing weights. The waists of these ladies are apparently under their bosoms; their feet seem to be an ell long. An assembly hour is, after the manner of Lydgate's poem, a dream of delicious faces surmounted by minarets, towers, horns, excresences of every shape—enormous, fat, heart-shaped erections, covered with rich, falling drapery, or snow-white linen, or gold tissue; gold-wire boxes sewn with pearls and blazing with colours; round, flat-topped caps, from under which girls' hair escapes in a river of colour; crown shapes, circular shapes, mitre shapes, turbans, and shovel-shaped linen erections, wired into place.



Oh, my lady, my lady! how did you ever hear the soft speeches of gallantry? How did the gentle whispers of love ever penetrate those bosses of millinery?

And the moralists, among whom Heaven forbid that I should be found, painted lurid pictures for you of hell and purgatory, in which such head-dresses turned into instruments of torture; you lifted your long-fingered, medieval hand and shook the finger with the toad-stone upon it, as if to dispel the poison of their words.

I think it is beyond me to describe in understandable terms the proper contortions of your towered heads, for I have little use for archaic words, for crespine, henk, and jacque, for herygouds with honginde sleeves, for all the blank cartridges of antiquarianism. I cannot convey the triple-curved crown, the ear buttress, the magnet-shaped roll in adequate language, but I can draw them for you.

I will attempt the most popular of the roll head-dresses and the simpler of the stiff-wired box. Take a roll, stuffed with hemp or tow, of some rich material and twist it into the form of a heart in front and a V shape behind, where join the ends, or, better, make a circle or hoop of your rolled stuff and bend it in this way. Then make a cap that will fit the head and come

over the ears, and make it so that this cap shall join the heart-shaped roll at all points and cause it to appear without any open spaces between the head and the roll; the point of the heart in front will be round, and will come over the centre of the face. By joining cap and roll you will have one complete affair; over this you may brooch a linen wimple or a fine piece of jagged silk. In fact, you may twist your circle of stuff in any manner, providing you keep a vague U shape in front and completely cover the hair behind.

For the box pattern it is necessary to make a box, let us say of octagonal shape, flat before and behind, or slightly curved; cut away the side under the face, or leave but a thin strip of it to go under the chin. Now stuff your box on either side of the face and cut away the central square, except for 3 inches at the top, on the forehead; here, in this cut-away piece, the face shows. You will have made your box of buckram and stuffed the wings of it with tow; now you must fit your box to a head and sew linen between the sides of the head and the tow to hold it firm and make it good to wear. You have now finished the rough shape, and you must ornament it. Take a piece of thin

gold web and cover your box, then get some gold braid and make a diaper or criss-cross pattern all over the box, leaving fair sized lozenges; in these put, at regular intervals as a plain check, small squares of crimson silk so that they fit across the lozenge and so make a double pattern. Now take some gold wire or brass wire and knot it at neat intervals, and then stitch it on to the edges of the gold braid, after which pearl beads may be arranged on the crimson squares and at the cross of the braid; then you will have your box-patterned head-dress complete.

It remains for you to enlarge upon this, if you wish, in the following manner: take a stiff piece of wire and curve it into the segment of a circle, so that you may bend the horns as much or as little as you will, fasten the centre of this to the band across the forehead, or on to the side-boxes, and over it place a large wimple with the front edge cut. Again, for further enhancement of this delectable piece of goods, you may fix a low gold crown above all—a crown of an elliptical shape—and there you will have as much magnificence as ever graced lady of the fifteenth century.

A WOMAN OF THE TIME OF HENRY VI.
(1422—1461)

HER head-dress is very high, and over it is a coloured and jagged silk wimple, a new innovation, being a change from the centuries of white linen wimples. Her waist is high, after a long period of low waists.

September 28, 1443, Margaret Paston writes to her husband in London:

'I would ye were at home, if it were your ease, and your sore might be as well looked to here as it is where ye be now, liefer than a gown though it were of scarlet.'

My dear diplomatist, I have forgotten if you got both your husband and the gown, or the gown only, but it was a sweetly pretty letter, and worded in such a way as must have caused your good knight to smile, despite his sore. And what had you in your mind's eye when you wrote 'liefer than a gown though it were of scarlet'? It was one of those new gowns with the high waist and the bodice opening very low, the collar quite over your shoulders, and the thick fur edge on your shoulders and tapering into a point at your bosom. You wanted sleeves like wings, and a fur edge to the bottom of the gown, besides the fur upon the edges of the sleeves—those quaint sleeves, thin to your elbows, and then great and wide, like a foresail. I sup-

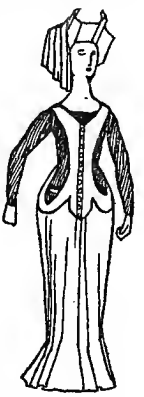
pose you had an under-gown of some wonderful diapered silk which you thought would go well with scarlet, because, as you knew, the under-gown would show at your neck, and its long train would trail behind you, and its skirt would fall about your feet and show very bravely when you bunched up the short upper gown — all the môde—and so you hinted at scarlet.

Now I come to think of it, the sleeve must have been hard to arrive at, the fashions were so many.

To have had them tight would have minimized the use of your under-garment; to have had them of the same width from elbow to wrist would not have given you the newest of the new ideas to show in Norfolk; then, for some reason, you rejected the bag sleeve, which was also in the fashion.

No doubt you had a cotehardie with well-fitting sleeves and good full skirts, and a surcoat with a wide fur edge, or perhaps, in the latest fashion of these garments, with an entire fur bodice to it. You may have had also one of those rather ugly little jackets, very full, with very full sleeves which

came tight at the wrist, long-waisted, with a little skirt an inch or so below the belt. A mantle, with cords to keep it on, I know you had. Possibly—I have just thought of it—the sleeves of your under-gown, the tight sleeves, were laced together from elbow to wrist, in place of the old-fashioned buttons.



I wonder if you ever saw the great metal-worker, William Austin, one of the first among English artists to leave a great name behind him—I mean the Austin who modelled the effigy of Earl Richard Beauchamp, at Warwick.

You must have heard the leper use his rattle to warn you of his proximity. You, too, may have thought that Joan of Arc was a sorceress and Friar Bungay a magician. You may have—I have not your wonderful letter here for reference—heard all about Eleanor of Cobham, and how she did penance in a shift in the London streets for magic against the King's person.

Some ladies, I notice, wore the long-tongued belt—buckled it in front, and then pushed it round until the buckle came into the centre of the back and the tongue hung down like a tail; but these ladies were not wearing the high-waisted gown, but a gown with a normal waist, and with no train, but a skirt of evenfulness and of the same length all the way round.

There were striped stuffs, piled velvet, rich-patterned silks, and homespun cloths and wool to choose from. Long-peaked shoes, of course, and wooden clogs out of doors.

The town and country maids, the merchants' wives, and the poor generally, each and all according to purse and pride, dressed in humbler imitation of the cut of the clothes of the high-born, in quite simple dresses, with purse, girdle, and apron, with heads in hoods, or twisted wimples of coarse linen.

Well, there you lie, ladies, on the tops of cold tombs, stiff and sedate, your hands uplifted in prayer, your noses as often as not

knocked off by later-day school-boys, crop-headed Puritans, or Henry VIII.'s sacrilegious hirelings. Lie still in your huge head-dresses and your neat-folded gowns—a moral, in marble or bronze, of the pomps and vanities of this wicked world.

EDWARD THE FOURTH

Reigned twenty-two years: 1461—1483.
Born 1441. Married, 1464, Elizabeth Woodville.

THE MEN

I INVITE you to call up this reign by a picture of Caxton's shop: you may imagine yourself in the almonry at Westminster, where, in a small enclosure by the west front of the church, there is a chapel and some almshouses. You will be able to see the rich come to look at Mr. Caxton's wares and the poor slinking in to receive alms.

'If it please any man, spiritual or temporal, to buy any pyes of two or three commemorations of Salisbury use emprynted after the form of this present letter, which be well and truly correct, let him come to Westminster into the Almonry at the red pale, and he shall have them good cheap.'

This was Caxton's advertisement.

As you watch the people going and coming about the small enclosure, you will notice that the tonsured hair has gone out of fashion, and that whereas the merchants, citizens, and such people wear the roundlet hat, the nobles and fine gentlemen are in black velvet caps, or tall hats with long-peaked brims, or in round high hats with fur brim close to the crown of the hat, or in caps with little rolled brims with a button at the top, over which two laces pass from back to front, and from under the brim there falls the last sign, the dying gasp of the liripipe, now jagged and now with tasselled ends.

We have arrived at the generally accepted vague idea of 'medieval costume,' which means really a nazy notion of the dress of this date: a steeple head-dress for ladies, a short waist, and a train; a tall, sugar-loaf hat with a flat top for the men, long hair, very short and very long tunics, long-pointed shoes, and wide sleeves—this, I think, is the amateur's idea of 'costume in the Middle Ages.'

You will notice that all, or nearly all, the passers-by Caxton's have long hair; that the dandies have extra-long hair brushed out in a cloud at the back; that the older men wear long, very simple gowns,

which they belt in at the waist with a stuff or leather belt, on which is hung a bag-purse; that these plain gowns are laced across the front to the waist over a vest of some coloured stuff other than the gown.

You will see that the poor are in very simple tunics—just a loose, stuff shirt with sleeves about 8 inches wide, and with the skirts reaching to the knees, a belt about their middle—rough, shapeless leather shoes, and woollen tights.

You will remember in the early part of the reign, before the heraldic shield with the red pale, Caxton's sign, caught your eye, that the fashionable wore very wide sleeves, great swollen bags fitting only at shoulder and wrist, and you may recall the fact that a tailor was fined twenty shillings in 1463 for making such wide sleeves. Poulaines, the very long shoes, are now forbidden, except that an esquire and anyone over that rank might wear them 2 inches beyond the toes; but I think the

A MAN OF THE TIME OF EDWARD IV.
(1461—1483)

NOTICE the jagged ribbon falling from the brim of his hat; this is the last of the liripipe.

dandies wore the shoes and paid the fine if it were enforced.

See Caxton, in a sober-coloured gown, long, and laced in the front, showing a plain vest under the lacing, talking to some of his great customers. The Duchess of Somerset has just lent him 'Blanchardine and Eglantine'; Earl Rivers, the Queen's brother, talks over his own translation of 'The Sayings of the Philosophers'; and Caxton is extolling that worshipful man Geoffrey Chaucer, and singing praises in reverence 'for that noble poet and great clerke, Vergyl.'

Edward himself has been to the shop and has consented to become patron of an edition of Tully—Edward, with his very subtle face, his tall, handsome appearance, his cold, elegant manners. He is dressed in a velvet gown edged with fur; the neck of the gown is low, and the silk vest shows above it. Across his chest are gold laces tapering to his waist; these are straight across the front of his gown-opening. His hair is straight, and falls to the nape of his neck; he wears a black velvet cap upon his head. The skirts of his gown reach to his knees, and are fur-edged; his sleeves are full at the elbows and tight over his

wrists; he is wearing red Spanish leather, tall boots, turned over at the top.

As he stands talking to Caxton, one or two gentlemen, who have also dismounted, stand about him. Three of them are in the height of the fashion. The first wears a velvet tunic, with fur edges. The tunic is pleated before and behind, and is full and slightly pursed in front; the sleeves are long, and are cut from shoulder to wrist, where they are sewn together again; cuff and border of the cut or opening are both edged with fur. The neck is high, but there is no collar. The length of the tunic is quite short; it comes well above the knees. His under-sleeves are full, and are of rich silk; his shoes are certainly over the allowed length; his tights are well cut. His peaked hat has gold bands round the crown.

The second gentleman is also in a very short tunic, with very wide sleeves; this tunic is pleated into large even folds, and has a belt of its own material. His hair is long, and bushed behind;

his tights are in two colours, and he wears an eighteen-penny pair of black leather slops or shoes. His hat is black, tall, but without a peak; a long feather is brooched into one side of it.

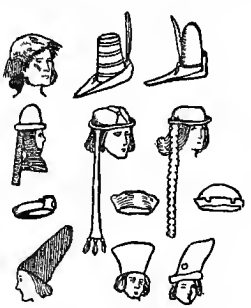
The third man is wearing a low black cap, with a little close brim; a jagged piece of stuff, about 3 feet long, hangs from under the brim of his hat. He is wearing long, straight hair. This man is wearing a little short tunic, which is loose at the waist, and comes but an inch or two below it; the sleeves are very loose and wide, and are not fastened at the wrist; the tunic has a little collar. The shortness of his tunic shows the whole of his tights, and also the ribbon-fastened cod-piece in front. His shoes are split at the sides, and come into a peak before and behind.

Now, our gentlemen of this time, having cut open their baggy sleeves, and made them to hang down and expose all the under-sleeve, must now needs lace them up again very loosely. Then, by way of change, the tight sleeve was split at the

elbow to show a white shirt. Then came the broad shoulders, when the sleeves were swelled out

at the top to give an air of great breadth to the shoulders and a more elegant taper to the waist. Some men had patterns sewn on one leg of their tights. The gown, or whatever top garment was being worn, was sometimes cut into a low, V shape behind at the neck to show the undergarment, above which showed a piece of white shirt.

A long gown, in shape like a monk's habit, wide sleeves, the same width all the way down, a loose neck—a garment indeed to put on over the head, to slip on for comfort and warmth—was quite a marked fashion in the streets —as marked as the little tunic.



If you are remembering Caxton's shop and a crowd of gentlemen, notice one in a big fur hat, which comes over his eyes; and see also a man who has wound a strip of cloth about his neck and over his head, then, letting one end hang down, has clapped his round, steeple-crowned hat over it.

You will see high collars, low collars, and absence of collar, long gown open to the waist, long gown without opening, short-skirted tunic, tunic without any skirt, long, short, and medium shoes, and, at the end of the reign, one or two broad-toed shoes. Many of these men would be carrying sticks; most of them would have their fingers covered with rings.

Among the group of gentlemen about Edward some merchants have pressed closer to see the King, and a girl or two has stolen into the front row. The King, turning to make a laughing remark to one of his courtiers, will see a roguish, pretty face behind him—the face of a merchant's wife; he will smile at her in a meaning way.

THE WOMEN

France, at this date, shows us a sartorial Savonarola, by name Thomas Conecte, a preaching friar, who held an Anti-Hennin Crusade, which ended in a bonfire of these steeple head-dresses. The flames of these peculiar hats lit up the inspired devotees, and showed their heads

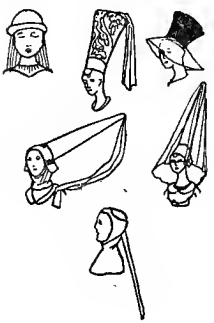
wrapped in plain linen wimples or some little unaffected caps. But the ashes were hardly cold before the gray light of the next day showed the figure of the dreaded preacher small upon the horizon, and lit upon the sewing-maids as they sat making fresh steeples for the adornment of their ladies' heads.

Joan of Arc is dead, and another very different apparition of womankind looms out of the mists of history. Whilst Joan of Arc is hymned and numbered among the happy company of saints triumphant, Jane Shore is roared in drinking-songs and ballads of a disreputable order, and is held up as an awful example. She has for years been represented upon the boards of West End and Surrey-side theatres—in her prime as the mistress of Edward IV., in her penance before the church door, and in her poverty and starvation, hounded from house to house in a Christian country where bread was denied to her. I myself have seen her through the person of a stout, melancholy, and h-less lady, who, dressed in a sort of burlesque fish-wife costume, has lain dying on the prompt-side of the stage, in a whirl of paper snow, while, to the edification of the twopenny gallery, she has

bewailed her evil life, and has been allowed, by a munificent management, to die in the arms of white-clad angels. There is a gleam of truth in the representation, and you may see the real Jane Shore in a high steeple head-dress, with a thin veil thrown over it, with a frontlet or little loop of black velvet over her forehead; in a high-waisted dress, open in a V shape from shoulder to waist, the opening laced over the square-cut under-gown, the upper gown having a collar of fur or silk, a long train, broad cuffs, perhaps 7 inches long from the base of her fingers, with a broad, coloured band about her waist, a broader trimming of the same colour round the hem of her shirt, and in long peaked shoes. In person of mean stature, her hair dark yellow, her face round and full, her eyes gray, and her countenance as cheerful as herself. The second real picture of her shows you a haggard woman, with her hair unbound and falling about her shoulders, shivering in a shift, which she clutches about her with one hand, while the other holds a dripping candle; and the third picture shows an old woman in dirty wimple and untidy rags.

There are many ways of making the steeple

head-dress. For the most part they are long, black-covered steeples, resting at an angle of forty-five degrees to the head, the broad end having a deep velvet band round it, with hanging sides, which come to the level of the chin; the point end has a long veil attached to it, which floats lightly down, or is carried on to one shoulder. Sometimes this steeple hat is worn over a hood, the cape of which is tucked into the dress. Some of these hats have a jutting, upturned piece in front, and they are also covered with all manner of coloured stuffs, but not commonly so. All persons having an income of £10 a year and over will have that black velvet loop, the frontlet, sewn into their hats. There is another new shape for hats, varying in height from 8 to 18 inches. It is a cylinder, broader at the top than the bottom, the crown sometimes flat and sometimes rounded into the hat itself; this hat is generally jewelled, and covered with rich material. The veils are attached to these hats in several ways; either they float down behind from the centre of the crown of the hat, or they



A WOMAN OF THE TIME OF EDWARD IV.
(1461—1483)

SHE wears the high hennin from which hangs a wisp of linen. On her forehead is the velvet frontlet, and across her forehead is a veil stretched on wires.

are sewn on to the base of the hat, and are supported on wires, so as to shade the face, making a roof over it, pointed in front and behind, or flat across the front and bent into a point behind, or circular. Take two circles of wire, one the size of the base of your hat and the other larger, and dress your linen or thin silk upon them; then you may pinch the wire into any variations of squares and circles you please.

The veil was sometimes worn all over the steeple hat, coming down over the face, but stiff enough to stand away from it. Towards the end of the reign the hats were not so high or so erect.

Remember, also, that the horned head-dress of the previous reign is not by any means extinct.

There remain two more forms of making the human face hideous: one is the head-dress closely resembling an enormous sponge bag, which for some unknown reason lasted well into the reign of Henry VII. as a variety to the fashionable head-gear of that time, and the other is very simple, being a wimple kept on the head by a

circular stuffed hoop of material, which showed plain and severe across the forehead. The simple folk wore a hood of linen, with a liripipe and wide ear-flaps.

The dresses are plain in cut; they are all short-waisted if at all fashionable. The most of them have a broad waist-belt, and very deep borders to their skirts; they have broad, turned-back cuffs, often of black. These cuffs, on being turned down over the hand, show the same colour as the dress; they are, in fact, the old long cuff over the fingers turned back for comfort.

It is by the variety of openings at the necks of the gowns that you may get change. First, let me take the most ordinary—that is, an opening of a V shape from shoulders to waist, the foot of the V at the waist, the points on the top of the shoulders at the join of the arm. Across this opening is seen, cut square and coming up to the base of the bosom, the under-gown. You may now proceed to vary this by lacing the V across, but not drawing it together, by having the V fur-edged, or made to turn over in a collar of

black upon light material, or its opposite, by showing a vest of stuff other than that of the undergown, which will then make a variety of colour when the skirt is held up over the arm. Or you may have your dress so cut that it is high in front and square cut, and over this you may sew a false V collar wither to or above the waist. I have said that the whole neck-opening may be covered by a gorget of cloth, which was pinned up to the steeple hat, or by a hood of thin stuff or silk, the cape of which was tucked into the dress.

The lady, I think, is now complete down to her long-pointed shoes, her necklet of stones or gold chain, with cross or heraldic pendant, and it remains to show that the country-woman dressed very plainly, in a decent-fitting dress, with her waist in its proper place, her skirt full, the sleeves of her dress turned back like my lady's, her head wrapped in a wimple or warmed in a hood, her feet in plain, foot-shaped shoes, and wooden clogs strapped on to them for outdoor use or kitchen work; in fact, she looked much like any old body to-day who has

lived in a village, except that the wimple and the hood then worn are out of place to-day, more's the pity!

No doubt ladies were just human in those days, and fussed and frittered over an inch or so of hennin, or a yard or two of train. One cut her dress too low to please the others, and another wore her horned head-dress despite the dictates of Fashion, which said, 'Away with horns, and into steeples.' No doubt the tall hennins, with their floating veils, looked like black masts with silken sails, and the ladies like a crowd of shipping, with velvet trains for waves about their feet; no doubt the steeples swayed and the silks rustled when the heads turned to look at the fine men in the days when hump-shouldered Richard was a dandy.

EDWARD THE FIFTH

Reigned two months: April and June, 1487.

RICHARD THE THIRD

Reigned two years: 1483—1485.
Born 1450. Married, 1473, Anne Neville.

THE MEN

FASHION'S pulse beat very weak in the spring of 1483. More attune to the pipes of Fate were the black cloaks of conspirators and a measured tread of soft-shoed feet than lute and dance of airy millinery. The axe of the executioner soiled many white shirts, and dreadful forebodings fluttered the dovecots of high-hennined ladies.

The old order was dying; Medievalism, which made a last spluttering flame in the next reign, was now burnt low, and was saving for that last effort. When Richard married Anne Neville, in the same year was Raphael born in Italy; literature was beginning, thought was beginning; many of the great spirits of the Renaissance were alive and working in Italy; the very trend of clothes showed something vaguely different, something which shows, however, that the foundations of the world were being shaken—so shaken that men and women, coming out of the gloom of the fourteenth century through the half-light of the fifteenth, saw the first signs of a new day, the first show of spring, and, with a perversity or an eagerness to meet the coming day, they began to change their clothes.

It is in this reign of Richard III. that we get, for the men, a hint of the peculiar magnificence of the first years of the sixteenth century; we get the first flush of those wonderful patterns which are used by Memlinc and Holbein, those variations of the pine-apple pattern, and of that peculiar convention which is traceable in the outline of the Tudor rose.

The men, at first sight, do not appear very different to the men of Edward IV.'s time; they have the long hair, the general clean-shaven faces, open-breasted tunics, and full-pleated skirts. But, as a rule, the man, peculiar to his time, the clothes-post of his age, has discarded the tall peaked hat, and is almost always dressed in the black velvet, stiff-brimmed hat. The pleated skirt to his tunic has grown longer, and his purse has grown larger; the sleeves are tighter, and the old tunic with the split, hanging sleeves has grown fuller, longer, and has become an overcoat, being now open all the way down. You will see that the neck of the tunic is cut very low, and that you may see above it, above the black velvet with which it is so often bound, the rich colour or fine material of an under-garment, a sort of waistcoat, and yet again above that the straight top of a finely-pleated white shirt. Sometimes the sleeves of the tunic will be wide, and when the arm is flung up in gesticulation, the baggy white shirt, tight-buttoned at the wrist, will show. Instead of the overcoat with the hanging sleeves, you will find a very plain-cut overcoat, with sleeves comfortably wide, and with little plain lapels to the collar. It is cut wide enough in the

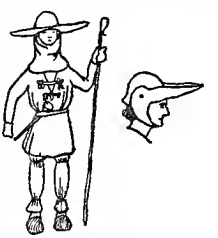
back to allow for the spread of the tunic. Black velvet is becoming a very fashionable trimming, and will be seen as a border or as under-vest to show between the shirt and the tunic. No clothes of the last reign will be incongruous in this; the very short tunics which expose the cod-piece, the split-sleeve tunic, all the variations, I have described. Judges walk about, looking like gentlemen of the time of Richard II.: a judge wears a long loose gown, with wide sleeves, from out of which appear the sleeves of his under-tunic, buttoned from elbow to wrist; he wears a cloak with a hood, the cloak split up the right side, and fastened by three buttons upon the right shoulder. A doctor is in very plain, ample gown, with a cape over his shoulders and a small round cap on his head. His gown is not bound at the waist.

The blunt shoes have come into fashion, and with this the old long-peaked shoe dies for ever. Common-sense will show you that the gentlemen who had leisure to hunt in these times did not wear their most foppish garments, that the tunics were plain, the boots high, the cloaks of strong material. They wore a hunting-hat, with a long

A MAN OF THE TIME OF RICHARD III.
(1483—1485)

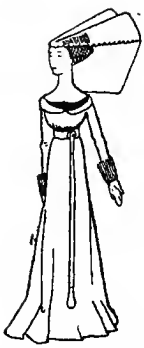
HERE one sees the first of the broad-toed shoes and the birth of the Tudor costume—the full pleated skirts and the prominence of white shirt.

peak over the eyes and a little peak over the neck at the back; a broad band passed under the chin, and, buttoning on to either side of the hat, kept it in place. The peasant wore a loose tunic, often open-breasted and laced across; he had a belt about his waist, a hood over his head, and often a broad-brimmed Noah's Ark hat over the hood; his slops, or loose trousers, were tied below the knee and at the ankles. A shepherd would stick his pipe in his belt, so that he might march before his flock, piping them into the fold.



To sum up, you must picture a man in a dress of Edward IV.'s time, modified, or, rather, expanded or expanding into the costume of Henry VII.'s time—a reign, in fact, which hardly has a distinct costume to itself—that is, for the men—but has a hand stretched out to two centuries, the fifteenth and the sixteenth; yet, if I have shown the man to you as I myself can see him, he is different from his father in 1461, and will change a great deal before 1500.

THE WOMEN



Here we are at the end of an epoch, at the close of a costume period, at one of those curious final dates in a history of clothes which says that within a year or so the women of one time will look hopelessly old-fashioned and queer to the modern woman. Except for the peculiar sponge-bag turban, which had a few years of life in it, the woman in Henry VII.'s reign would look back at this time and smile, and the young woman would laugh at the old ideas of beauty. The River of Time runs under many bridges, and it would seem that the arches were low to the Bridge of Fashion in 1483, and the steeple hat was lowered to prevent contact with them. The correct angle of forty-five degrees changed into a right angle, the steeple hat, the hennin, came toppling down, and an embroidered bonnet, perched right on the back of the head, came into vogue. It is this bonnet which gives, from our point of view, distinction to the reign. It was a definite fashion, a distinct halt.

It had travelled along the years of the fourteenth century, from the wimple and the horns, and the stiff turbans, and the boxes of stiffened cloth of gold; it had languished in the caul and blossomed in the huge wimple-covered horns; it had shot up in the hennin; and now it gave, as its last transformation, this bonnet at the back of the head, with the stiff wimple stretched upon wires. Soon was to come the diamond-shaped head-dress, and after that the birth of hair as a beauty.

In this case the hair was drawn as tightly as possible away from the forehead, and at the forehead the smaller hairs were plucked away; even eyebrows were a little out of fashion. Then this cylindrical bonnet was placed at the back of the head, with its wings of thin linen stiffly sewn or propped on wires. These wires were generally of a V shape, the V point at the forehead. On some occasions two straight wires came out on either side of the face in addition to the V, and so made two wings on either side of the face and two wings over the back of the head. It is more easy to describe through means of the drawings, and the reader will

soon see what bend to give to the wires in order that the wings may be properly held out.

Beyond this head-dress there was very little alteration in the lady's dress since the previous reign. The skirts were full; the waist was high, but not absurdly so; the band round the dress was broad; the sleeves were tight; and the cuffs, often of fur, were folded back to a good depth.

The neck opening of the dress varied, as did that of the previous reign, but whereas the most fashionable opening was then from neck to waist, this reign gave more liking to a higher corsage, over the top of which a narrow piece of stuff showed, often of black velvet. We may safely assume that the ladies followed the men in the matter of broad shoes. For a time the old fashion of the long-tongued belt came in, and we see instances of such belts being worn with the tongue reaching nearly to the feet, tipped with a metal ornament.

Not until night did these ladies discard their winged head erections; not until the streets were dark, and the brass basins swinging from the

A WOMAN OF THE TIME OF RICHARD III.
(1483—1485)

THE great erection on her head is made of thin linen stretched upon wires; through this one may see her jewelled cap.

barbers' poles shone but dimly, and the tailors no longer sat, cross-legged, on the benches in their shop-fronts—then might my lady uncover her head and talk, in company with my lord, over the strange new stories of Prester John and of the Wandering Jew ; then, at her proper time, she will go to her rest and sleep soundly beneath her embroidered quilt, under the protection of the saints whose pictures she has sewn into the corners of it. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, bless the bed that she lies on.

So we come to an end of a second series of dates, from the First Edward to the Third Richard, and we leave them to come to the Tudors and their follies and fantastics ; we leave an age that is quaint, rich, and yet fairly simple, to come to an age of padded hips and farthingales, monstrous ruffs, knee-breeks, rag-stuffed trunks, and high-heeled shoes.

With the drawings and text you should be able to people a vast world of figures, dating from the middle of the thirteenth century, 1272, to nearly the end of the fifteenth, 1485, and if you allow ordinary horse-sense to have play, you will be able to people your world with correctly-dressed figures

in the true inspiration of their time. You cannot disassociate the man from his tailor; his clothes must appeal to you, historically and soulfully, as an outward and visible sign to the graces and vices of his age and times.

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