THE TIPPETS OF THE CANONS ECCLESIASTICAL: WITH ILLUSTRATIVE WOOD CUTS

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The tippets of the canons ecclesiastical: with illustrative wood cuts by Gilbert J. French

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GILBERT J. FRENCH

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The Tippets of the Canons Ecclesiastical.

WITH

Illustrative Wood Cuts.

BY

Gilbert J. French.

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NOTICE.

THIS Paper was read before a meeting of the British Archæological Association at Manchester, on the 24th August, 1850, presided over by the LORD BISHOP OF MANCHESTER. Its favourable reception is mainly attributable to the circumstance of its being read by J. R. PLANCHÉ, Esq., and illustrated by full-sized Drawings by W. LANGTON, Esq. To these gentlemen I am greatly indebted for their kind and voluntary assistance at a time when my personal attendance was prevented by illness. The Illustrative Wood Cuts have been carefully rendered from my own inefficient Drawings, by the kind attention of Mr. JOHN BASTIN.

G. J. F.

Fig. 1.

The Tippets
of
The Canons Ecclesiastical.

IN many quarters considerable misapprehension prevails as to the meaning of the word "tippet," which occurs more than once in the Canons of the English Church: it is the purport of this paper to point out, as far as possible, the origin of this ornament, and the different uses to which it is applied.

The modern and *lay* signification of the word tippet is a rather small cape encircling the neck and covering the shoulders. In this form it is still occasionally used, and will be easily remembered as a portion of the dress of many female charity schools. The tippet of the middle ages was a very

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Illustrations.

Fig. 1.—"Thomas Bedel of Redburne," engraved in Strutt's *English Dresses.* Plate cix.

different and more important ornament of the person. It formed a curious and conspicuous part of the hood or capucium, which was then worn almost universally by both sexes and all ranks as a covering for the head and shoulders. Its parts and uses will be easily understood by referring to the description of the antiquary Stow. "**These Hoods,**" he says, "**were worn the roundlets upon the heads, the skirts to hang behind in their necks to keep them warm, the tippet to lie on the shoulder or to wind about their necks.**"* — It was, however, worn in various fashions, and applied to curious uses. Chaucer tells that the miller in the "Reve's Tale" wore on holidays "**his tippet ybounde about his hede,**"† and of "The Frere" we are told that


Fig. 2.


Fig. 3.


Fig. 4.


Fig. 5.

"**His tippet was ay farsed ful of knives**
And pinnes, for to given fayre wives."‡

The tail-like appendage, called the liripipe, or tippet, varied in its length and

* Stow's *Survey of London*, edited by Strype. Book v. chap. vii.
† *Canterbury Tales*, "The Reve's Tale."
‡ *Canterbury Tales*, "The Frere," in prologue.

Illustrations.

Fig. 2.—Traveller in hood, from Strutt's *English Dresses*, edited by Planche. Plate lxxiv.
Fig. 3.—Hood twisted round the neck, from *English Dresses*. Plate lxxiv.
Fig. 4.—Hood fastened round the head, engraved in Boutell's *Monumental Brasses*, p. 162.
Fig. 5.—Gentleman with hood, from Strutt's *English Dresses*. Plate lxxiv.

breadth according to the fluctuating fashions of the time. One of its purposes appears to have been to indicate the rank of the wearer. This is illustrated by the enamelled ornaments on the celebrated cup belonging to the Corporation of Lynn, which was recently exhibited at the Rooms of the Society of Arts in London. The noblemen and ladies of a hunting party are there represented in hoods with tippets reaching all the way down their backs, while attendants, huntsmen, and abigails have the same ornament varying from a minimum length of a few inches.

Fig 6.

Fig. 7.

Fig 8.

So important was this formerly considered, that the fashion of tippets, particularly with respect to their length and breadth, was made the subject of repeated royal ordinances. Thus we find that the queen of Henry VII. was entitled to wear a tippet "**lying a good length on the traine of her mantle, and in breadth a naple and an inch.**" Peers of that time might wear tippets a yard and a half long. The gentry were required to wear them a yard long and an inch broad, while

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Illustrations.

Fig. 6.—Rustic of the fourteenth century.

Figs. 7, 8.—Figures from the Lynn cup, reduced from the enlarged engraving in Carter's *Ancient Sculpture and Painting in England.*