

**HISTORICAL, PHILOSOPHICAL,
AND
HUMOROUS REFLECTIONS ON
A GENTLEMAN'S WARDROBE**

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Historical, philosophical, and humorous reflections on a gentleman's wardrobe by Various

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VARIOUS

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HISTORICAL,
PHILOSOPHICAL, AND HUMOROUS
REFLECTIONS



ON A

GENTLEMAN'S WARDROBE.

INCLUDING
CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE MOST EMINENT CHARACTERS
OF THE DAY.

PRESENTATIONS AT COURT.

"JUS ANTE ALIOS, PLECEDENDI ET SEDENDI."

"Court virtues bear, like gems, the highest rate—
Born where Heaven's influence scarce can penetrate."
POPE.

HINTS TO THE NAVAL AND MILITARY "STAFF;" THE
UNIVERSITIES OF CAMBRIDGE AND OXFORD. COS-
TUMES FOR THE SOIREE AND THE BALL ROOM.
DIRECTIONS TO GENTLEMEN ABOUT TO
RETIRE FROM THEIR WARDROBES.

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CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

| | PAGE. |
|--|-------|
| The Shirt of Nessus—the Vest of Mirza—the Roman Catholic Church—Greek Church of Russia | 9 |
| Naples and the Lady of Loretta—Butler, the Middlesex Magistrate, and Charles Dickens—Jonathan Wild and Jerry Abershaw—Johnson—Oliver Goldsmith—Sheridan Knowles and Sergeant Talfourd—Mitre Court and the Law Life Assurance | 11 |
| The Happy Man—The Foundling Hospital—Lamb's-fields—Spa-fields—The Earl of Northampton—The Bridegroom Elect and Stephen Pearson | 12 |
| The Colloquy—Moses and the Profite—The Sheriffs' Court—Deacon and Williams—Psychological curiosities | 14 |
| Alfred Bunn and Balfe—In this old chair my father sat—The Marquis of Waterford, &c. &c. | 15 |

"Go thou and do likewise."

CHAPTER II.

| | |
|--|-------|
| Aldgate Pump—Alexander Pope—Douglas Jerrold—Mivart's Hotel and the Mansion House—Mr. Tegg, the publisher, and Mr. Matthew, the stationer—Lords Russell, Cottenham, &c. | 16-19 |
|--|-------|

CHAPTER III.

| | |
|--|-------|
| Mr. and Mrs. Brown—The <i>Times</i> Report, from Marlborough street—George the Fourth's Wardrobe | 20-24 |
|--|-------|

interchange of a faded vest lead direct to the Central Criminal Court—

“ Can such things be,
And overcome us like a summer cloud,
Without our special wonder ?”

SHAKSPERE.

It is sincerely to be hoped, that while the adoption of the following pages will not break the heart of any speculative Yellow-plush, or interfere with the vested rights of those who, by *perquisites*, always intend *profit*, that the man of fashion—the nobleman—who generally maintains his wardrobe, and, by so doing, sustains thousands of individuals, will be led to see how best to encourage the established tradesman, who, in his turn and change of life, is enabled to sustain and encourage others.

An interchange of style or state
May make both heart and soul elate ;
And vest or tunic, rich and rare,
Meet with the promptitude of care.
“ Off with your lendings ! ”—so said *Lear* ;
“ Off with them and unbutton here.”
Stand by the tradesman fair and true,
Beware the Jezebel* and Jew.

* No allusion to Miss Timber : *Parole d'Honneur*.

REFLECTIONS,

ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE SHIRT OF NESSUS—THE MANTLE OF ELIJAH—THE
LAMP OF ALADDIN—THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
—BELGIUM AND GREECE—SHAKSPERE—CHARLES
DICKENS—JONATHAN WILD—SERGEANT TALFOURD
—DR. JOHNSON—OLIVER GOLDSMITH—THE HAPPY
MAN—THE BEDFORD ESTATE AND STEPHEN PEAR-
SON—BALFE, ALFRED BUNN, AND THE MARQUIS
OF WATERFORD.

IN the Heathen Mythology the shirt of Nessus proved of most dangerous quality, inasmuch as it forthwith blistered the skin of the unhappy wearer. Contrarywise, the mantle of Elijah the Prophet bestowed on the fortunate recipient of it the gift of foretelling events. Every school-boy remembers the precious influences of the old lamp of Aladdin, and how it procured a goodly store of wealth for its fortunate possessor. The mystic vest of Mirza, the Persian—albeit ragged as the wild colts of the Caucasus—proved a blessing to him who could but approach the hem of the garment; and the Roman Catholic

Church—particularly in Belgium, and from thence to the boundaries of the Greek Church of Russia—abounds with relics of old matters, handed down by the fathers of the primitive Church for the lip-worship of adoring thousands. In Naples they show the identical petticoat worn by our Lady of Loretto; and, in fact, every little chapel or crypt boasts of some article of clothing or other, rendered sacred either by time, historical recollections, or religious faith.

In these times who can fix the amount that would freely be given for the possession of Shakspeare's breeches, the possession of his coat, or the attainment of his trunk hose? Is there a man in existence who would not sigh to *stand* in his *shoes*? Butler, the Middlesex magistrate,* would cheerfully hand forth a thousand pounds for a Shaksperian nightcap—if, indeed, Shakspeare ever condescended to wear one; and an old castor, whether duly bonnetted at the Boar's Head, in Eastcheap, or carefully brushed up at Stratford-on-Avon, would prove of inestimable value.

Charles Dickens, in his description of Monmouth-street, wittily descants most graphically upon old shoes, old coats, and ancient matters of all descriptions; his truly philanthropic disposition breaks out in every line—and he most distinctly proves that what is vulgarly termed the second-hand article, may in truth turn out in the end to be a first-rate gift.

If the coat gives the outward garnish to the man, why not agree to its influence on the mind? Does any man think he could sit as coolly and at ease in the unmen-

* This gentleman bought largely at the late sale of Shaksperian relics, at the Auction Mart.

tionables of Jonathan Wild or Jerry Abershaw, as he could in the well-finished garments of the bluff Dr. Johnson, Oliver Goldsmith—or, to come lower down in point of time (not of intellect), say Sheridan Knowles, Charles Dickens, or Sergeant Talfourd? Is it not a fact, well attested by the parochial authorities of St. Dunstan in the West, that the little sweeper who attended the crossing from Mitre-court to the Law Life Assurance, grew so eloquent and so classic in his appeals to the public that he was soon enabled to make over his chance living for a very considerable sum of money—say some 200*l.*? Now what was the cause? The benevolent author of *Ion* had seen the poor fellow—and seeing him, clothed him—and by so doing showered down wealth and comfort upon him. Many, very many, are the instances of the intrinsic value of a second-hand garment.

It is reported of a certain happy wight about to be married, that he was most desirous of a suitable garment wherewith to make the important step—for better or for worse. One of the wandering tribe of gipsies bade him by all means to obtain the coat of "THE HAPPY MAN!"—could he but obtain that, the marriage would prove successful, and, in fact, his fortune would be achieved. Long did this bridegroom elect search London—street, square, lane, and humble locality—for the coat of the "HAPPY MAN." No one had it for disposal. He turned his eyes eastward: neither *Moses* nor the *Profits* could aid him. Southward, matters were still worse. And here lay the difficulty: he wanted not a new coat, made to measure, and so forth—no dazzling blue with gilt buttons, double refined, or any such glaring matters. No; the old Sybil had issued her prophetic word, and it was