

Plume & Sculpture.

It is naturally with feelings of some misgiving
& diffidence that I venture to address you
my dear ladies on a theme closely connected
with ~~you~~ the most sacred technicalities of your
personal adornment; and if I use the
wrong words for things I hope I may
rely on your sympathy & pity rather
than the scorn which, in most affairs of
life, is the just due of ignorance openly
displayed. I must also give you fair warning
that you will not get rid of me till
I have instituted certain invasions, possibly
odious and it may even be held in some
quarters uncalled for comparisons between
things ancient and modern in the matter
of ~~personal adornments~~ ^{dress}. — but I must say
to you frankly what I say to the budding
designers at M^o Gill that the ^{realization of the} insignificance
of our latter day achievement in all matters
of taste & style is the starting point for any
effort towards a return to better things. I am
not going to deplore the imbecility of modern
sculpture, decorative and representative, but rather
deal with the root of the matter and comment
on the absence of flow & sweep to say nothing
of comfort in the more recent developments of
dress making and tailoring. It is on this side
of the Atlantic by the way that the acutest lapses
from sanity in dress have manifested themselves.
It has been reserved for the American public,
who should have known better, to take a just

If the Ladies have always afforded the greatest inspiration to the Sculptors
and if the Sculptors have ceased to be inspired it is surely ~~the~~ you
Ladies who are in part to blame.

to be aimed at

in earnest and establish as an ideal, the
 amiable caricatures of that deft draughtsman
 Mr Gibson. But we are getting to the
 wrong end of our subject first and as
 there is nothing like historical sequence we
 shall deal with Egyptian, Greek, Roman,
 Gothic & Italian examples of costume, ^{as exemplified} in
 Sculpture in that order.

It is in sculpture preeminently that the
 beauties of drapery have been expressed and
 it is typical of the wrong-headed modern way
 of looking at things that few go beyond
 sculpture to seek these beauties in the
 moving folds. Pictorial drapery by the way
 is quite another matter. To some painters
 costume is a matter of composition only, —
 a net work of line wherewith to emphasize
 points of interest or suggest ~~action~~ ^{movement}; ~~to~~
~~others~~ ^{others} again it is movement. It is so employed
 by Botticelli. Others find in the colour and
 material rather than in the flows of garments
 a codes in which to express their meaning.
 Thus Veronese does not worry much about the
 material or texture but revels in the colour
 of his drapery, while Holbein takes delight
 in soft fur crisp silk and the
 utter dark of velvet. But the sculptor
 working in three dimensions is in the best
 position to get the fundamental beauty
 that is in wearing apparel. — a beauty which
 for lack of a better word we shall call
 flow — the impression of quality of movement.
 Perhaps I may be permitted to expand this
 idea a little before going further.

1
 Botticelli

2
 Veronese

3
 Holbein

4

* Red

* Red.

Movement like everything else possesses its own language not transmitted by dashes & dots however but by sweeps and jerks. From time immemorial man's two main dimensions, Love & War, have been rendered artistically in the various forms of dance and atagonistic exercise; in all of which rhythmic motion spells success. It is in Sculpture and in Sculpture alone that a graceful movement can be adequately crystallised. In thus expressing graceful movement or dignity of pose the lines of garments have ~~always~~ ^{ever} been a great assistance to the artist, always provided that the garments be so reasonable as to be compatible with the fullest freest movement. In this respect the stern rigidity of the mail clad knight of Marathon or even Creecy compares favourably with that military idiosy, the high stiff collar. As far as I have been able to analyse it that mysterious thing known as a military bearing is based upon an inability to look suddenly to right or left by using any ~~part of the~~ muscles nearer the eye than those ^{of the ankle} ~~smaller of the back~~. ~~in some cases, the feet.~~ And I'd have seen a war stamed battalion leaving a transport at Southampton in ^{soft} weather worn khaki in which every man moved with the style & dignity of a self respecting and thoroughly comfortable panther. ~~In further connection I need only add that the spectacle of our American woman going up a stairs is little to call to mind nothing is much on the~~

~~Illustration of movement effected by garments to~~

In further illustration of movement impeded by irrationalities in modern garments I would comment on the verities among civilized women of the accomplishment of going up stairs gracefully.

~~Proverbial hen on a hot girdle.~~

5
6
Egyptians.

Egyptian garments had the great merit of simplicity and non interference with the articulations of joints or contractions of muscles but as they are somewhat partial and as Egyptian sculptors sought in the main to render poses rather than to express movement the chief point brought out by their efforts is the beauty of folds.

At a time when there was comparatively little art & less invention lavished upon the making of garments we find evidence of immense care and pains in the proper wearing of them and this art is not wholly extinct for the Spanish Gipsie ties on her shawl & the Indian Sepoy rolls his puttee with a conscious skill and ^{with} success. ~~which~~

Coming down to the Archaic period of Greek art say 600 B.C. we find that the ladies of this time had already evolved the underlying principle of Greek fashions. I use the word fashion in the modern sense of something which changes. The Greek fashions changed from decade to decade and coins and gems are often placed & dated by reference to ways of dressing the hair or wearing a cloak in different districts. My own ring for instance is an antique seal with the portrait of a Syracusan lady who flourished in 430 B.C. The nymph Arethusa in the Syracusan coin of that date has her hair dressed the same way even to a curl

120 x 60
24
100

Arethusa

before the ear. Well the underlying principle of Greek fashions was the folding of the garment in pleats or Ritzings wherever it was confined. The cut of Greek dresses varied not at all. The chic or correct style of wearing them did & it is just possible that the artist's like our delightful Mr. Gibson may have directed taste for good or ill.

The toilet of the Greek lady is well known to us. Two main sources supply us with the data as to powder, paint, hair oil & other ornaments. The little ^{votive} terra cotta figures known as "Tanagra figures" frequently show toilet scenes & poses and there is abundant evidence in the red & black vase paintings of the cave the stores bestowed in keeping the ladies dresses neatly folded. These same "Tanagra figures" took the place of ~~your caricature~~ ^{portraits} in black & white and in them we find ~~such~~ a reflection of Greek life quite as sympathetically humorous as "Punch" or "Life".

Well in 600 B.C. the art of Greece was being learned and in all early or archaic art there is a tendency to grasp hard at details. The old terra cotta figures recently found on the Acropolis at Athens show us more clearly than the finer later work just how the Greek ladies liked to look. — all very neat and prim. Crude as is the sculpture three distinct materials are traceable. Some of these priestesses have what is assuredly a knitted clovefitting garment very like

Vase slides.
10
"

or the ribbed jap. prints

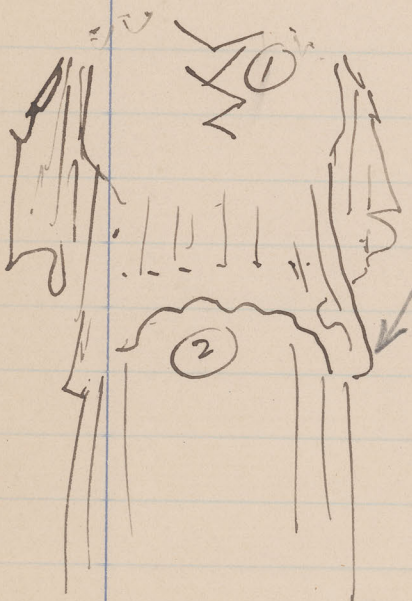
Archaic
12
13
14
15.

16
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18.

a sweater. Then, we have the long wrapper
 or undergarment ~~the latter~~ ^{XITWR} made of fine
 linen and thirdly we have the heavy upper
 cloak made from the wool of it of ~~long~~
 closely woven & shrunken flannel. styled a
 ΠΕΠΛΩΝ of long & a ιμάτιον. The ΧΙΤΩΝ is the old dress.
 The best way to explain how these things were
 generally worn is to give a practical
 demonstration. It will be noticed that
 the garments are simply squares of
 fabric with no tucks or ruffles or
 gathers or pleeces. The foldings come
 under two heads plain belts and
 falling zigzag. Studs buckles and
 safety pins of a graceful pattern were
 used in conjunction with thin fillet guides
 to keep the garment on and at the same
 time to keep it graceful.

The essentials of the good period.

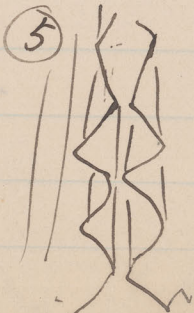
1. The ruffle below the neck.



2. The sides drawn further through.

3. The over guide below the breast.

4. The cross guide subsists chiefly in the minds of ^{modern} painters of classic genre. It appears later on towards Roman times, occasionally.



5. The zigzag.

Artemis 19

The Cloak or ^εΙΟΥΣΤΙΟΝ may be worn in as many ways as a highland plaid of Artemis of Versailles

Artemis 20

The Artemis of the Louvre is just putting on her

21

cloak. Note the shorter male ^{χιτων} with

22

which the huntress is clothed - the

23

400 BC equivalent of a rational cycling suit to day.

Sometimes the cloak is doubled at the top to give an extra fold over the chest on a cold day. While to free the arms for action the cloak is swathed about the loins or again as in the demeter of Knossos it may be swept close fold on fold around the torso.

Demeter 24

Nike 25

Part 10

26 27 28
29 30

Prise

Stela 31/32/33/34

Spoels 35

Of Greek Male attire I need only say that the ^{χιτων} is shorter amounting to not more than a tunic while the cloak may be voluminous. cf. Suptocles of the Vatican Museum Rome.

As the Roman sculpture shows some tendency to use drapery merely for the effect of mass broken surface & running line and as the garments differ only in size & name not in application I have restricted myself to Greek examples.

Caesar 36

Testal 37

Alban 38

The toga was a very voluminous upper garment.

I do not know whether male garments are as interesting to you as ladies cloaks are to us. Time does not permit of an excursion.

on that topic but I must here say that Greek Armour transcends the finest efforts in that direction of the middle ages in grace and loveliness + common sense just as that things Greek do the output of our later inferior intelligencies

Of course Medieval sculpture owed a debt to the lingering memory of the glory that had been and there is a manifest tendency up till the Renaissance when men boldly returned to classicism to make the newer garments fall into the sweeps + folds of the old.

For a brief period sculpture in Gothic France & Gothic England ^{with the exception of 1300.} ~~1300-1350~~ did reach the level of all but half a dozen of the Hellenic masterpieces but the school of work has never had the recognition it deserves. The subsequent return to classicism and the troublous times of religious + political reformation have tended to obliterate from the memory of man + from their stately niches the work of a breed of ~~men~~ sculptors who had only once before been ^{excelled} ~~beaten~~ and have never since been equalled.

Time does not permit me to illustrate the grace of Gothic sculpture ^{in 3 styles} but I shall draw briefly on the board the cut of the garments worn by these little personages from Dijon and show in rapid ^{succession} a few French examples. It will be observed that Gothic is very like Archaic Greek work.

Gothic
Archaic
394041424344

45 Gothic
54

The only Renaissance has provided us with a company of gaudy folk on walls & in niches and those ^{or} figures really belong to the Renaissance before the all prevailing ^{revived} Classicism had imposed its dreary sophisticated pedantries upon all the arts. The little ^{bronzes} Angels from the Scaliger tombs at Verona are hardly to be classed as Gothic while the recumbent Gaslendo Fois from Milan by Jacopo della Quercia shows the refinement & grace of handling so fully developed art & charmingly combined with the regularities and severities of a primitive school.

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58

Angels 57

Sutton 60

60

tc

61

The sculptor's inspiration should be as there on the sheet in the house at the festival. That he may get the concentrated epitome of beautiful things which is called truth into his head & thence into his work. One example of beauty is no use if I take a million to make a type for an artist to express.

I have carefully avoided dealing with the artistic handling of drapery by the sculptor. There is only time to say that he sculps best who never forgets in his skill that his material is stone or bronze & not fabric. He must render the characteristic beauties of the linen and flannel & leather and steel stonily without for imitation is not art.

We have now, ^{barring the smelt's eccentric modern French school} no real ^{Civil} school of sculpture & why ^{mainly} because there is so little to sculp. True the highest sentiments of every age will be expressed in the nude but you cannot feed a school of sculpture in the nude and for less upon ancient garments worn out these 2000 years. Now male attire is not so unsculptably ugly as is often supposed. If Gostin de Fois lies in the Milan Museum in an exquisitely folded kilt his sword upon his breast and his full short sleeves delicately creased the finest type the world has known of a warrior of gentle blood why should not a modern ^{Palaeontarian} ~~demagogue~~ rest in ironed trousers neat boots & symmetrically disposed pocket coat with if need be an arched or an eyeglass to ^{heighten his individuality} ~~emphasize the part to played~~. But even a della Quercia could not make a departed modern lady in her best ^{calling} dress look at ease lying flat on a slab. I don't think she could be very flat on the slab with any appearance.

of repose while she kept her best things on anyhow.

Therefore ladies I appeal to you to help the world to see another great school of sculpture by setting before all mens eyes the dignified beauty of a natural free gait, a natural form and garments that do not lose ~~the~~ ^{what little grace they have} ~~the~~ the moment you were in them + think how comfortable that would be. There has been an enormous improvement in late years in the revival of simple skirts. Please carry that simplicity further up and dont stop till the hat has been reached. Remember the smaller the head can be made to appear the greater the general dignity. All the dear departed ladies we had on the screen had their marble heads made exceptionally small. The effect you cant but acknowledge was stunning enough. 3 square feet of wove gauze ribbons ^{and hats} + ~~ribbons~~ displayed aloft to more than any daughters eyes proportions can stand. Besides it must be uncomfortable.

Shaw flowers

In medieval times ^{were worn} ~~loose~~ frocks for generations, now we eat the other way. Most of us have seen a great grandmothers wedding garment. I never heard of a modern creation being put away for future generations to admire. However, the more they ^{time} ~~the~~ ^{they} ~~last~~.

By a square piece of cloth someday. I can assure you a shepherds plaid is far more comfortable + becoming than the checkiest cutest jacket that ever came from Redfern or Jay or Worth.