

The Cutter's Practical Guide

===== TO CUTTING =====

Shirts, and Other Undergarments.

The shirt is probably the oldest style of garment worn by civilised men, for in one form or other we find it in the earliest styles of dress of which we have any authentic or detailed account.

The Babylonians, the Egyptians, the Greeks and the Romans all had their tunics or shirts, so that in some form the history of this garment may be traced through the ages of antiquity, until we have totalled up 5,000 or 6,000 years.

It is not merely an ancient garment, it is an universal one, for whilst fashions may come and go as regards outer clothing, and their styles may be adapted to climatic conditions of different countries, yet the shirt, as the garment that is worn next to the skin, is worn by the inhabitants of all lands, and of all social positions. Many of the

CLASSICAL REFERENCES

To garments, and which translators have rendered coat, ought really to have been rendered shirt; but owing to a false sense of propriety, they have preferred to call the garment a coat rather than a shirt.

Take, for instance, the Coat of Nessus, which was sent as a present to Hercules after he had killed Nessus. Hercules wore this next his skin, and it poisoned him, adhering firmly to his skin, so that he died in fearful agony.

The so-called Holy Coat of Treves is really a long, loose-fitting kind of shirt, and is like a modern night-shirt, cut low at the neck, and with loose sleeves.

ABUSED AND RIDICULED.

Like many other ancient institutions, the shirt has come in for its fair share of abuse, for, although the modern man has only been able to modify and adapt the style of shirt worn by his ancestors, yet he has not hesitated to use the shafts of ridicule against it. For instance, the poet has told us in his own beautiful way, of the King's search for happiness, and which his philosopher told him could only be obtained by wearing the shirt of a happy and contented man. The King travelled far and wide, and midst the rich he found not one man happy. He sought midst the humble and the lowly, and, after many failures, he at last found a man who appeared to be, and who professed to be, thoroughly happy and contented.

The King then sought to buy his shirt, but, alas! he had none. Hence the suggestion naturally arises that the wearing of shirts is not consistent with happiness; and we fear they have been the cause of many men using the most emphatic adjectives when the buttons have been missing, or the fit has been uncomfortable.

To return to the philosopher's view for a moment, it is not difficult to see the lesson he tried to teach. The thing was that the happy man was he who limited his wants to the barest necessities, and he evidently considered that the shirt was one of the last luxuries a man would consent to do without.