

achievements of Minerva against the giants, of Jupiter, of the heroes, and of men renowned for courage. From this it was said that the actions of men of bravery and courage were worthy of being transcribed in the garment of Minerva. In the Ceramieus, without the city, was an engine, built in the form of a ship, upon which the vestment was hung in the manner of a sail, and which was put in motion by concealed machinery. It was then conveyed to the temple of Ceres Eleusinia, thence to the Citadel, where it was put upon the statue of Minerva, which was then laid on a bed strewn with flowers.

We will not pursue the ceremonies of this festival any further. We may observe, however, that what remains to be described is sufficiently picturesque, and that the ceremonies usually ended with a goal-delivery, at which golden crowns are presented to those who had rendered any remarkable service to the commonwealth, and rhapsodists appointed to sing the poems of Homer.

Remarkable as the Panathenaea were, however, they were far inferior to the Eleusinian solemnity, which was the most renowned in Greece. Like those of which we have just spoken, it was divided into the Lesser and the Greater, the former being dedicated to Proserpine, the daughter of Ceres, in whose honour the other was celebrated. This festival was observed in the month Boedromion, answering to our September, and lasted nine days. To be initiated into the mysteries of this festival was no small matter to a Greek, as he was afterwards supposed to be more especially under the care of the gods whilst here; and hereafter to have one of the first places in that ideal island of Greek happiness, in which were situate the Elysian Fields. The candidates for this honour, being crowned with myrtle, were admitted by night into the mystical temple; a name, we may observe, in itself sufficiently Masonic to terrify a neophyte. On their entrance they washed their hands in holy water, and at the same time were admonished to present themselves with minds pure and undefiled, without which the external cleanness of the body would not be accepted. The sacred mysteries were then read to them out of a book of stone; yes, literally of stone, consisting of two leaves or slabs properly cemented together. They now beheld strange and frightful objects; sometimes the place in which they were appeared bright and resplendent with the light and radiant fire, and then suddenly became as dark as pitch. The earth would then quake beneath their very feet, and suddenly a flash of lightning would illuminate all around them, a roll of thunder would seem to shake the universe, and through the dingy atmosphere gloomy phantoms and spectres would make their appearance, to terrify the imagination. This is what was called initiation; and the candidates, having been thus initiated, were dismissed finally to consecrate the garments which they had worn during the ceremony to Ceres and Proserpine.—*English School and the Teacher.*

2. TEXTILE FABRICS OF THE ANCIENTS—LINEN.

A letter on the preparation of flax so as to resemble cotton, which we published recently, has elicited from an antiquarian correspondent the following curious and interesting *résumé* of what is known respecting the textile fabrics of the ancients:

Your correspondent's reference to the clothing of the Assyrian gods carries us back to a period when fine linen occupied a proud station among textile fabrics. The Greeks and Romans are but moderns when compared with the Egyptians and Assyrians. The fashions of Pharaoh's court, and the luxury of Sardanapalus, bore little analogy to the stately extravagance of George IV. or of Louis Quatorze. But unless, as Byron suggested, some future age should actually disinterment George IV. and his courtiers, posterity will probably be puzzled as to Brussels lace with the same doubts which perplex writers on ancient linen. When Lucius Lucullus invited his friends to supper in the Hall of Apollo, had he a shirt to his back? When lovely Thais inveigled the philosopher, had she a cambric handkerchief? The learned say that Alexander Severus was the first Emperor of Rome who wore a shirt, at least in our sense of the word, for everybody had an *indusium*. And here we are fairly plunged in the ambiguities of language, and we shall not easily emerge from them. The Roman *subucula*, the under-tunic, was made of *linum*. Was it linen or calico? Curtius uses *linum* of cotton and cotton cloth. In Yorkshire they call flax "line;" we moderns have restricted the word "linen" to the fabric made from flax. We may remark in general that the more deeply we dive into antiquity, the more completely isolated we find mankind in their arts and their luxuries, in their Religion and their Government. Clothing was one of the prime necessities of life, and different races of men have clothed themselves with various materials: the Chinese kept silkworms, and from time immemorial have worn silk; the natives of Hindostan cultivated the cotton tree, and consequently have worn calico; the Syrian, the Iberian, the Gaul, made garments of the skins of beasts; nay the ancient Spaniard, and all that maritime population which dwelt on the shores of the Bay of Biscay, used leather for the sails of their ships. When Lucian, who was a Syrian, describes Timon in his poverty, he

dresses the misanthrope in a dipthera, or leathern garment. Linen would have been unsuited to the poverty of Timon. Thus, even to modern times, while mankind live apart, nations are distinguished by their clothing. The native fabric of Otaheite was the tappa, made from the bark of trees, but Queen Pomaré, although, like Penelope, skilled in the indigenous manufacture, preferred for herself an English cotton gown. At Manilla they make muslin from the fibres of the pineapple; in New Zealand flax is in use, but the New Zealander does not employ the loom—he plaits the fibres into a square mantle for the chief.

So it is everywhere; the domestic production is cheap, the imported goods costly, and therefore valued. Thus linen, which so slowly made its way among the rugged Romans, was in more than one country the habiliment of females,—nay, of the gods and their attendants. In the days of old Homer, the wife of Ulysses superintended the spinning, but it was wool which her maids spun. Doubtless she had linen among her stores, but it was linen imported from Egypt, with which a trade already existed. Whether Penelope had not even some calico may be doubted; for, if cotton was not yet cultivated in Egypt, it was brought from the East by caravans. The wares of China have been found in the Pyramids, and a portion of those of India might have been there also. It is not at all unlikely that the rigging of the Grecian fleet which went to Troy was supplied from Egypt; for at a period long subsequent to that expedition we find Egyptian sailcloth made from flax enumerated among the commodities for sale in the Tyrian marts (Ezekiel xxvii. 7.) The manufacture of ropes from the same material is a frequently recurring subject of those truly immortal designs which illustrate Egyptian arts.

Here we are then, on the early traces of the East India trade. It was carried on partly by ship from the Malabar coast, and partly by caravans arriving at the Euxine Sea, or passing down through Syria to Tyre, or even to Egypt. In the age of Homer we find a Mediterranean trade in iron flourishing in full vigor. When Telemachus inquires of Mentor whither he was bound, the goddess in disguise informs the prince that she was conveying iron to Brundisium, where she would take up a return cargo of copper. Doubtless the other goal of this voyage was on the coast of Pontus. The Chalybes, or Chaldeans, were famous for their iron—whether they got it from the higher Asia, or forged it themselves. At all events, this track was one of those by which Asiatic goods found their way into Europe for centuries. In the age of Pliny, iron came from the Seres in company with wearing apparel and skins. But the earliest certain indication of the arrival of cotton in Europe is given by Herodotus. He relates the gift by Amasis, King of Egypt, to the Lacedæmonians, of a linen corslet, ornamented with gold and cotton, B. C. 556. The embroidery on this corslet, whether executed with the needle or the loom, was a triumph of Egyptian art. Devices of all kinds, more especially of religious character, were produced by the Egyptian craftsmen, who wrought, according to Julius Pollux, with a warp of linen and woof of cotton, or with colored threads, or gold. According to Pliny, whose information as to their operations was most accurate, they were familiar with the use of mordants. "In Egypt," says he, "they produce colored delineations with marvellous skill, not by applying the colors to the fabric, but drugs which take up the color. After the drug is applied there is no visible result; but the cloth, once plunged in the seething bath, is raised again partially colored. And marvellous it is, when there is but one color in the vessel, how a succession of hues is given to the robe, produced by the quality of the drug which calls them out; nor can they be subsequently effaced by washing."

It was probably against this delineation of patterns that the prohibitions of the Mosaic law in Leviticus xix., 19, and Deuteronomy, xxii., 11 were directed. The Israelites were to be withheld from luxury; that is the point of many of their insinuations; their strength consisted in their simplicity. But, moreover, they were to be preserved from the symbolism of Egypt. The embroidery representations of Egyptian gods were as hateful to Moses as the permanent images in wood or stone.

Here, then, we have arrived at the great flax-growing country. From Egypt the Greeks derived the manufacture of linen. But was all the linen which the Egyptians sold made from flax? More than one author has gone the length of asserting that the garments of the Egyptian priesthood, no less than mummy wrappers, were all cotton. This notion counts among its partisans the well-known names of Forster, of Tremellius, and of Dr. Solander. Rouelle, in the "Memoirs of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris in 1750," says that "all the mummy cloths without resinous matter which he had examined, were entirely of cotton; that the rags with which the embalmed birds are furnished forth to give them a more elegant figure, were, equally with the others, cotton." "Was the Egyptian flax cotton, after all?" he asks, "or was cotton consecrated by religion for the purpose of embalming?" The inquiries carried on at the British Museum led to the same conclusions as those arrived at by the Frenchman. But the more recent microscopical investigations of Bauer and