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## ANCIENT AND MODERN DRESS IN RELATION TO DISEASE.

READ IN THE SECTION OF PUBLIC MEDICINE AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION HELD IN DUBLIN, AUGUST, 1887, BY CHARLES MOORE JESSOP, M.R.C.P.LOND., PHYSICIAN TO ST. PANCRAS AND NORTHERN DISPENSARY.

**A**MONG civilized communities dress is a subject that has claimed considerable attention, and is a fruitful topic of conversation among women of all classes, nor are men behindhand in considering the fashion of their coats. Of late, however, female dress has attracted increased attention in the endeavour to return to a more healthy arrangement—that is to make fashion conform to Nature, in place of the internal organs being moulded and controlled by fashion; this return can only take place by considering the form, varied movements and functions of the organs contained in the body. The earliest record of clothing is dated at 5,890 years ago in the sentence, "They sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons." In this sentence Moses describes a form of dress common among the nations of Egypt, the land where he dwelt; he subsequently adds: "Adam and his wife were clothed with coats of skins." From this epoch, as men multiplied, different divisions of labor would occupy different sections of the community; some would make one article, some another, and each would barter his specialty. Garments at first would be made by sewing broad leaves together; the slender grasses and rushes would be twisted into fine strands and converted into a loose, open fabric. Afterwards

hair, cotton fibre, silky fibre, silk, or even birds down—a shawl of which from Cashmere is now in the possession of the writer—would be used. All kinds of clothing would give employment to various sections, that from vegetable material being chiefly used, whilst skins, being difficult to obtain by an ever-increasing community, would be more valuable for sandals, shoes, leggings ropes, shields, drinking cups, carriage and storage of water, used to this day in the desert and other places at a distance from water, and in A.D. 1327 as caldrons for cooking. Before the Flood, the inhabitants of the earth must have been well acquainted with the manufacture of cloth, for soon after Noah left the Ark he is found in his tent without his garment. Rebekah, when she met Isaac, covered herself with a veil; and Joseph had a coat of many colors. More than 2,700 years ago, therefore, there were different textures of cloth and dye processes. In the colossal statuary of Egypt, the figures are nearly nude, having only a piece of stuff around the waist, with short aprons half-way down the thigh, of papyrus plant material, or with an ampler dress made probably of flax, for Egypt was famous for different textures of linen, since Joseph was arrayed in fine linen. As there is no statuary of the Israelites and no special