

tatement of *Crescide* " printed in all the earlier editions of Chaucer's works, but assigned by Urry and later editors to the Scottish poet, Robert Henrysone, (cir. 1450,) we find the costume of one of his characters thus described :

Whan in a mantell and a *bever hat*,
 With cuppe and clapper wonder priuely
 He opened a secrete gate and out thereat
 Conveyed her, that no man should espie.

It was not however, till the vast resources of the forests of the new world had become known, that beaver wool became the indispensable material for the fashionable European hat. Nearly a century and a half after the discovery of America we at length find Charles I. in 1638, by royal proclamation prohibiting the use of any materials except beaver wool in the manufacture of hats, unless made for exportation. This royal prohibition amounted to a declaration of war by the king of England against the beaver settlements of his North American Colonies and the Hudson Bay Company's territories ; and within less than a century thereafter, they appear to have been almost totally exterminated from the colonies to the south of the St. Lawrence and the great lakes. The French traders in 1743, imported into Rochelle, 127,080 beaver skins, and the British Hudson's Bay Company sold 26,750 skins the same year. Within less than half a century thereafter, when Canada had become a British possession, the trade in beaver peltries seems to have reached its maximum, and to have been maintained with only a slight decline till the commencement of the present century. In 1788, upwards of 170,000 beaver skins were exported from Canada, and the value of those forwarded to England from Quebec alone, in 1808, is estimated at nearly £119,000 stg. The effect of such a wholesale destruction of the poor beaver could not fail to become apparent, notwithstanding the vast regions of the North-West over which the Hudson's Bay trapper and the Indian hunter ranged in pursuit of their defenceless prey. The great fur companies at length became impressed with the danger this profitable branch of their trade was exposed to, and even the improvident Indian learned to systematize his mode of beaver trapping so as to avert its total extermination. The Iroquois and Hurons,—among whom the beaver was known as the *Tsoutayè*,—were especially skilled in its pursuit, and their habit was always to leave at least one pair in the beaver-dam, and to let this remain un-