

mentioned elsewhere in Scripture, Elijah wore a leathern girdle, and the words in the original, which have been translated "girded up," should be rather "tightened up," and can be rendered more exactly by the Latin "*fortiter constrinxit*," than the usual English translation, which might lead to the erroneous impression that pulling up of the skirts was meant. The girding up of the loins referred to elsewhere in the Old Testament—for example, with regard to the ceremonies observed at the feast of the Passover,—has the same signification, and expresses also the connection between such girding and active exertion. The Arab tribes of our own day wear girdles from their earliest infancy, and we are informed by Prof. Robertson Smith that in the case of the Bedouins, they are worn tight as a matter of respectability. He further tells us that when he himself travelled in an Arab dress, he was instructed always to draw his girdle tight, a loose girdle being regarded in the East, at the present day, as characteristic of a dissolute, luxurious person. In the privacy of home life the girdle is either loosened or removed. Many similar examples could be given with regard to other Semitic races.

When we come to the Greeks, it need hardly be said that the girdle was an essential part of the male and female costume. The expression *εἰς ὅσον*, employed by Herodotus, and other writers, where the distance between two places is referred to as what "a well-girt man" can do in a given time, shows that the Greeks also had recognized the connection between tight waist-belts and active muscular exertion. Greek women, we know, used several varieties of girdles, wearing frequently, and at one period of Greek history, usually, one girdle below the bosom, and the other round the waist, lower down, the upper one being sometimes called the *Strophion*, which was worn over the under tunic, while the other, the *Zone*, was worn round the waist proper, or even lower. The *Zone*, or *Cestus of Venus*, which, as will be remembered, was borrowed by the Queen of Heaven, is represented in very archaic figures of the younger goddess as being worn round the waist; higher, therefore, than the virgin *Zone*, and lower than the *Strophion*. Diana is often represented as wearing both the upper and lower girdles.

The leathern girdle of the Greek soldiers, frequently referred to as the *Mitra*, was worn at the bottom of the cuirass. The corresponding military belt of the Romans was called the *Cingulum*.

The Roman women also employed a variety of girdles, similar in position and purpose to those used by the women of Greece. Amongst the Romans, the girdle was worn tight, it being considered most effeminate and indecorous for a man to appear in the street with the tunic loosely girded. For instance, Nero, Mæcenas,