

Women in Trousers.

Females of Many Lands Wear Male Apparel.

It is curious that while in the East the fair sex wear trousers and men long robes, in the West the custom is reversed—men wear the loose trousers or close-fitting pantaloons and women the loose robes.

Necessity sometimes compels women to adopt almost completely the same garb as the men. Kalmuck women, save in the ornate and complex arrangement of the hair, when riding or engaged in field work, dress exactly like the men. The Jewish women of Tunis and Algiers wear a dress which is a kind of medium, but dispense entirely with the long skirts.

The Alpine women, accustomed and compelled to climb and descend, often with heavy burdens, wear habitually loose trousers, for skirts would be a constant peril. In the mountain parts of South America, women, in riding, adopt male attire, as they now do generally among us, though the fearfully dangerous skirt is retained. The English women who work in the mines are similarly attired.

In India there are tribes like the Zulus whose

attire is of this description. In more civilized lands and circles there are cases where no vulgar desire for notoriety has been the motive. Rosa Bonheur had to go to fairs to make studies for her cattle and to wander afield unaccompanied. Hence her choice of the French laborer's blue smock, cap and trousers.

Sarah Bernhardt's mannish garments in her studio are a part of her play-acting and self-advertising. It may be that she is aware she never looked so charming as years ago in the part of an Italian boy—a vagrant musician. The simplicity of masculine clothes—made in black velvet, and, on the whole, effeminate—must be a pleasant change after the clinging draperies with the weighty trains and box plaitings, which make her rustle like a snake in fallen autumn leaves when she advances on the stage.

Sometimes it is not only convenient but the part of decency for girls to don the garb of their brothers. The two nieces of Cardinal Mazarin, if they had not disguised themselves as French gentlemen, Paduan students, Neapolitan fisher boys, would have been relegated to convents in nowise

differing from prisons. The rough adventures through which they passed and the hardships to which they exposed themselves, renewed their youth and kept them lovely far beyond middle age.

They toiled in a felucca as sailors from Naples to Marseilles, faced storms, hung out all sail to escape from Algerian pirates and were so browned by sun, sea-air and work that the officers of the Roman Inquisition, who boarded the craft to capture them, did not know them, although they took them down to the hold.

The Duchess Mazarin rode from Plymouth to London dressed as a man. She and Nell Gwynn, as Florimel in "The Maiden Queen," brought men's clothes into fashion at the Court of Whitehall. But in the seventeenth century masculine clothing was as sumptuous and ornate as that of the fine ladies.

George Sand dressed in paletot and trousers for cheapness' sake. She had to be when she run away from her husband, her own laundress, and soon got sick of washing, clear-starching and ironing the white cotton and muslin petticoats then obligatory on bourgeoisie women.