

# From the Hobble to the Trousers— Women Who Wear Men's Clothes

**S**ISTERS, are you going to free yourselves from the shackles of the skirt? Are you going to follow the hobble gown to its logical conclusion? That garment "looks like one leg of a pair of trousers," according to one observer. From the hobble to the trousers there is but one step, therefore. Recipe—take two hobble skirts and fasten them together. The result will be a pair of trousers, plus a flare around the bottom that is absent from the masculine variety. But, then, women must have something different in dress, you know.

According to Mrs. Alma Webster Powell—lawyer, prima donna, dress reformer, reformer in other directions, etc.—there is a revolt all over the world against the skirt. "We women have been the greatest fools that ever were," says Mrs. Powell. "With skirts you have to wear a lot of petticoats underneath, and skirts are not modest or healthy. They are indecent. A Turk told me once that he wouldn't allow his wives to wear skirts like American women because it was not decent. His wives have to wear bloomers that come down to their ankles."

Therefore Mrs. Powell has devised a new costume for women. No, trousers do not form a part of it, but its main feature is a sort of "near pants," consisting of a divided skirt. It is similar to garments which have been devised recently for use by women aeroplanists and is guaranteed to permit freedom of movement to the wearer. It must be confessed that there has been no wild rush by women to procure the new garment.

There are in the world today at least two famous women who have carried their revolt against the ordinary garb of women to the extent of adopting complete men's costumes—trousers and all. One of them is a Frenchwoman, Mme. Dieulafoy, and the other is the famous American, Dr. Mary Walker. No doubt there are many other women masquerading as men, but in their cases they are taken for members of the sterner sex by the persons with whom they come in contact. Instances of this latter sort crop up in the news now and then.

The cases of Mme. Dieulafoy of Paris and Dr. Mary Walker of America are quite different. They are women dressed in men's clothing, and they make no effort to conceal their sex. Mme. Dieulafoy, indeed, has official authorization for her adoption of masculine costume. She wears it by virtue of a legal decree by the government of her country, granted in recognition of her scientific achievements in archaeology. Rosa Bonheur, the famous French painter, who died in 1899, also had the legal right to wear men's clothes. She declared that women's garments hampered her in her work, especially in painting the pictures of

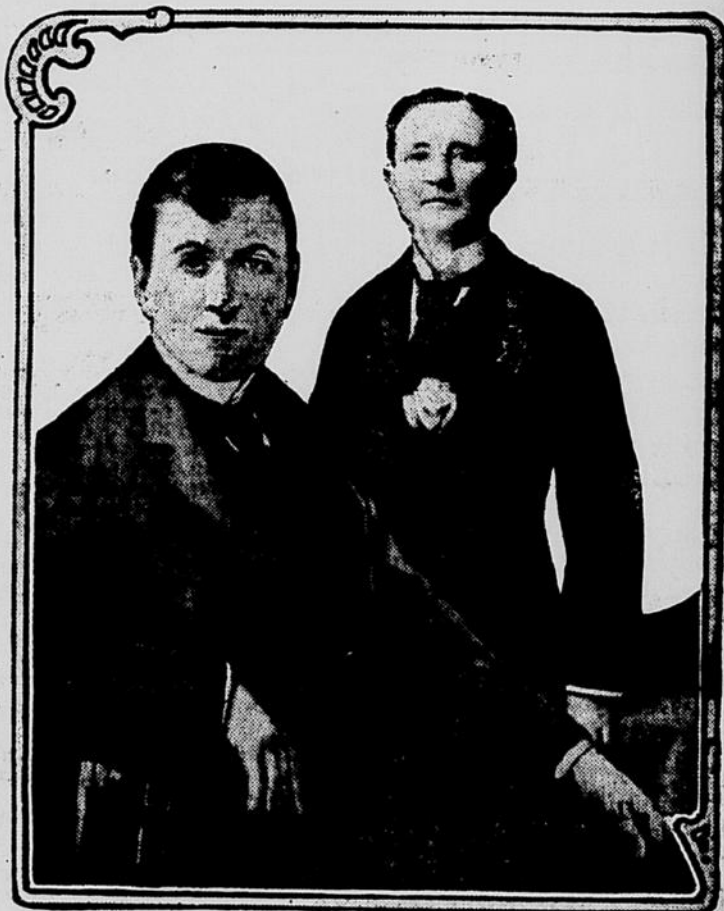
animals which won renown for her.

Our own example of the man-woman in dress is Dr. Mary Walker, who has worn trousers for at least fifty years. In a signed statement to the newspapers made twenty years ago she declared that she "wore what was called 'men's clothes' many years before the war, in time of the war and ever since." She said about the same time that before Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Mrs. Bloomer and Lucy Stone were heard of she was delivering lectures on dress reform. "At the time they began their work in dress reform I was wearing trousers," said Dr. Walker.

The "doctor" in the trousered woman's name is no fancy or unearned title. She won it by studying and

practicing the value of her work by giving her a medal, of which she is very proud, and she is also the recipient of a pension from the government.

Of trousers clad women who have adopted the masculine garments with the intent and expectation of deceiving the public there have been several instances in recent years. One of the latest was that of the young English girl who lived here for some time and dressed in men's clothing for the reason, she asserted, that she could not procure work when she was clad in the conventional garments of her sex. Several years ago there lived in New York city a woman who dressed in men's clothing and who went by the name of Murray Hall. She played a part in politics. It was said that her



MME. DIEULAFOY.

DR. MARY WALKER.

practicing medicine, and she turned her skill to good use during the civil war, when she filled the post of acting assistant surgeon in the Union army. It was then that Dr. Walker found her trousers useful to her. Congress rec-

skill in deceiving people as to her own was well exercised in the manner in which she fooled the politicians, even judges of human nature, with whom she associated.

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