

RECONSTRUCTION OF THE TUNIC

Figs. 48 and 70 show the styles of tunic worn until after the beginning of the third century A. D.

Fig. 48 is here shown as a boy's tunic with the very narrow stripes, but the same kind of tunic with stripes of either of the other widths was also worn by men. In fact, either style of tunic might have stripes of either width.

Material: Of modern fabrics, white flannel probably resembles most closely the material generally used by the Romans, but linen and cotton were also used. A cheap, half-bleached, or unbleached, loosely woven soft muslin makes a satisfactory substitute.

The Stripes: In order to get the proper color for the stripes, it may be necessary to dye a piece of cloth to be used for that purpose. Considerable latitude can be properly allowed in the choice of the exact shade. (See Plate I for shades of Roman purple.) A commercial dye which most nearly approximates one of the first four shades there shown can be used.

Measurements: The measurements of the tunic are flexible within reasonable limits. The tunics of Figs. 76a and 76b are about the same length. When ungirt, they extend to a point about two-thirds of the way between the knee and the ankle joint. The measurement for the width should be taken with the wearer's arms extended laterally, straight from the shoulders, and are as follows:

Fig. 51b. Width: The measurement of the wearer across the breast to a point on each upper arm a little more than half way between the shoulder and the elbow.

Fig. 83. Width: The measurement across the breast, along the entire upper arms and two-thirds of the lower arms.

Fig. 72. Width: The measurement across the breast and to the middle of each elbow joint.

In order to illustrate the tunic made in two pieces, that of Fig. 72 is made with a seam on each shoulder and with a vent left at the end of each sleeve.

The Making of the Tunic: The pleasing appearance and convincing effect of a reproduction of a classical garment or drapery depend largely upon the care with which it is made, and the extent to which the sewing necessary in the reconstruction can be made to simulate the work of the loom in certain details. For this reason careful and minute instructions are given for all reconstructions. A careless reconstruction will be untruthful and unconvincing.

As heretofore stated, the Romans, in making their tunics, needed only to sew up the underarm seam; or, if it were a two-piece tunic, the shoulder seams must also be sewed. The stripes were inwoven and the neck opening, selvage; but in the reconstruction, the stripes must be sewed in and the neck opening cut and finished with needle work.

In order to produce the effect of being inwoven, the stripes must be sewed into the tunic and not applied on the outside. In the reconstruction, therefore, the one-piece tunic is really made of three pieces—a central panel which is connected by a stripe on either side with the two side pieces. The seams must be straight and even, and carefully pressed.

The neck opening is a straight horizontal slit just large enough to permit the head to pass through. It is located exactly in the middle of the central panel. It should be finished so as to simulate as nearly as possible a selvage edge. It should never be bound. A rolled hem produces a good effect. If the cloth used is of the required width, the arm holes can have the selvage edge of the cloth; otherwise they can be finished in the same manner as the neck opening.

The stripes of Fig. 76a (the *angustus clavus* of the equites) are about

one and one-eighth inches wide; those of Fig. 83 about one-half inch; and those of Fig. 72 (the *latus clavus*) about four inches.

The Girding: We have found (page 59) that the proper girding of the tunic was an affair of no small importance. "Slovenliness" is the term Quintilian applied to ill-girding of the tunic, and the epithet was well chosen. The girdle should be drawn around the waist as tightly as comfort will permit. The tunic should be drawn up over the girdle so as to be of the length prescribed by Quintilian (page 58). The stripes should hang straight. This girding gives to the upper part of the tunic the form of a loose blouse which falls over and conceals the girdle and allows complete freedom of motion to the arms without disturbing the arrangement of the lower, or skirt part. The skirt should hang in straight lines from the girdle without flaring, the extra fullness being laid in a large plait or fold over each hip.