

A Treatise on Hair

A treatise on the hair. By David Richie hairdresser. (1770)

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Of the modern Fashion of Dressing Gentlemens Hair.

The general and most fashionable method of dressing gentlemens hair in this country, is, when it is of a proper length, to tie it almost close to the neck, and the remainder to be queued¹, ramillied², or put up in a club, either smooth or plaited³, and wrapt round with a black ribbon, or inclosed in a rose or full-dress silk bag, according to fancy: the front hair may be cut or dress'd in various fashions, as follows:

The top may be dress'd in several forms, as a toupee, or curled in the shape of a horseshoe; or fizzed backwards from the forehead about two or three inches, rising highest in the middle, called an Allegreek top: the side curled at

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at the ear may be dress'd in one, two, three, or more rows of curls, one above another, either separate or promiscuous; some have curls all over the fore-part of the head, and the others have the hair cut to comb plain over the forehead: but of all these fashions, property, convenience, and what suits the features, out to be considered.

It is now the fashion that gentlemens hair is never thought to be dress'd without powder....

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...Women study dress only to add to their beauty; whereas men should dress suitable to their various ranks in life...to produce in us different ideas of the qualities of men, which may be seen by actors, who alter their dress according to the different characters there are to preform; for when the hair is dress'd short at the ear, in various curls, and raised at the top of the head, this gives the person so dressed an air of freedom and gaiety;

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¹ When the hair is pulled back very tight into a single tail, which may or may not be braided.

² A wig with a long braid in back with a big bow on top and a smaller one on the bottom.

³ A plait means a braid.

gaiety; but in proportion as they are lowered at the top and sides of the head, indicates sedateness and gravity; as may be seen by the dress of the clergy, judges, counsellors, &c. whose wigs, being made suitable to their particular functions, and not in imitation of natural hair, n: but to dress the hair in any fashion that can add grandeur or dignity to the countenance, depends on the art and judgement of the hairdresser.

Ritchie, David, Hair-dresser. *A treatise on the hair: Shewing Its Generation. Means of its Preservation. Causes of its Decay. How to recover it when lost. What occasions its different Colours; with the probable Means to alter it from one Colour to another. Its most proper Management in different Climates, and in all the Stages, and Circumstances of Life. also a description of the most fashionable methods of dressing ladies and gentlemens hair; both Natural and Artificial. With An Essay on Dress in General, Address'd to the Ladies of Great-Britain.* By David Ritchie, Hair-Dresser, Perfumer, &c. London, MDCC.LXX. [1770]. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Gale. GEORGE WASHINGTONS MOUNT VERNON. 11 Apr. 2019 <<http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=moun3955&tabID=T001&docId=CW3315878991&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE>>.