

trimmed with the geometric work of the period, and the making of lacis and point coupé, as before mentioned, was the favourite employment of her court. Catherine encouraged dress and extravagance, and sought by brilliant fêtes to turn people's minds from politics. In this she was little seconded either by her husband or gloomy son King Charles; but Henry III. and his "mignons frisés et fraisés" were tricked out in garments of the brightest colours, toques and toquets, pearls, earrings, and jewels. The ruff was the especial object of royal interest. With his own hand he used the poking-sticks and adjusted the plaits. "Gaudronneur des collets de sa femme" was the soubriquet bestowed on him by the satirists of the day.⁵

By 1579 the ruffs of the French court had attained such an outrageous size, "un tiers d'aulne"⁶ in depth, that the wearers could scarcely turn their heads.⁷ So absurd was the effect, the journalist of Henry III.⁸ declares, "they looked like the head of John the Baptist in a charger."

Nor could they eat so encumbered. It is told how Reine Margot one day, when seated at dinner, was compelled to send for a spoon with a handle 2 feet in length wherewith to eat her soup.⁹ These monstrosities, "so stiffened they cracked like paper,"¹⁰ found little favour beyond the precincts of the Louvre. They were caricatured by the writers of the day; and in 1579 a band of students decked themselves out in large paper ruffs after the royal cut, and paraded the fair of St.-Germain, shouting, "A la fraise on connoit le veau." The king arrived unexpectedly, and sent them to prison for their impertinence.¹¹ Suddenly, in 1575, the fraise gave way to the "rabat," or turn-down collar, but both were worn alternately for some time. In vain

⁵ "Satyre Menippée," Paris, 1593.

⁶ "Chronologie novenaire," Vict. P. Cayet.

⁷ "S'ils se tournoient, chacun se reculoit crainte de gater leurs fraizes."—*Satyre Menippée*.

"Le col ne se tourne à leur aise
Dans le long reply de leur fraise."
Vertus et Propriétés des Mignons, 1576.

⁸ "Ces beaux mignons portoient . . . leurs fraizes de chemise de toute d'atour empesez et longues d'un demi-pied, de façon qu'à voir leurs testes dessus leurs

fraizes, il sembloit que ce fut le chef de Saint-Jean dans un plat."—*Journal de Henri III., Pierre de l'Estoille*.

⁹ "Perroniana," Cologne, 1691.

¹⁰ "Goudronnées en tuyaux d'orgue, fraisées en choux crépus, et grandes comme des meules de moulin."—*Blaise de Viginière*.

"La fraize veaudelisée à six étages."
La Mode qui Court, Paris, N. D.

¹¹ "Appelez par les Espagnols 'lechu-guillas,' ou petites laitues, à cause du rapport de ces gaudrons repliés avec les fraises de la laitue."—*Histoire de la Ville de Paris*, D. Mich. Félibien.