

CHAPTER XXVI.

GEORGE I. AND II.

GEORGE I.

“Wisdom with periwigs, with cassocks grace,
 Courage with swords, gentility with lace.”

Connoisseur.

“Les fols donnent cours aux modes; les sages n’affectent pas de s’en écarter. Si ridicule que puisse être certaine mode, il est encore plus ridicule de s’en écarter.”

Alleaume.

THE accession of the house of Hanover brought but little change either in the fashions or the fabrics. In 1717 the king published an edict regarding the hawking of lace, but the world was too much taken up with the old Pretender and the court of Saint-Germain; the king, too, was often absent, preferring greatly his German dominions.

We now hear a great deal of lace ruffles; they were worn long and falling. Lord Bolingbroke, who enraged Queen Anne by his untidy dress—“she supposed, forsooth, he would some day come to court in his nightcap”—is described as having his cravat of point lace, and his hands hidden by exaggerated ruffles of the same material. In good old Jacobite times, these weeping ruffles served as well to conceal notes—“poulets”—passed from one wary politician to another, as they did the French sharpers to juggle and cheat at cards.

Lace continued the mania of the day. “Since your fantastical geers came in with wires, ribbons, and laces, and your furbelows with three hundred yards in a gown and petticoat, there has not been a good housewife in the nation,”¹ writes an indignant dramatist. The lover was made to bribe the Abigail of his mistress

¹ “Tunbridge Wells,” 1727.