

## ON GAUNTLETS.<sup>1</sup>

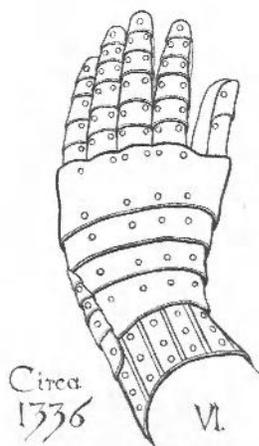
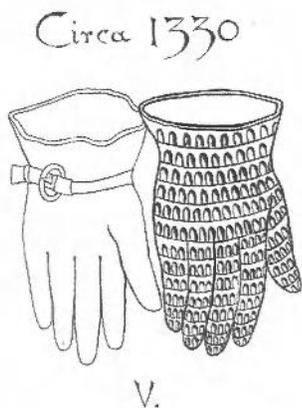
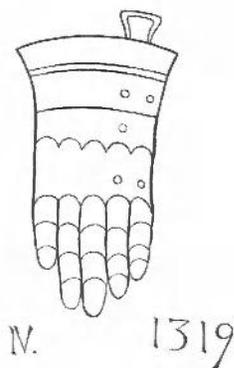
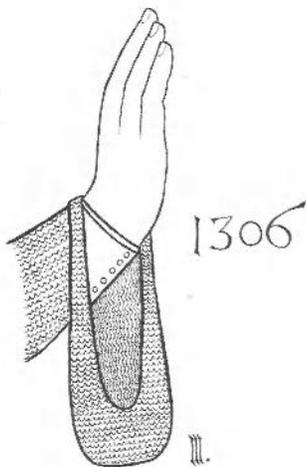
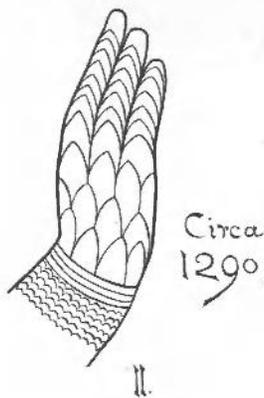
By the BARON DE COSSON.

Second only in interest to the helmet is that part of the harness of steel, worn by our forefathers in battle and tournament, which was designed to protect nature's beautiful piece of mechanism—the hand.

If the helmet is the piece of armour in which the armourer more loved to display beauty of form and hardihood of design, it is in the gauntlet that we find the most delicate workmanship, the most perfect arrangements for securing freedom and variety of motion. I am here speaking especially of the finer examples of the armourer's art, for in this craft as in every other there was a vast difference between the productions of a master and those of an inferior workman.

That the helmet and the gauntlet should be the parts of the steel harness in which the armourer's skill was more especially shown, might be expected from the importance of the parts of the human body covered by those pieces. An efficient protection for the head was of vital necessity, and yet it was needed that sight, speech, hearing, and the very act of breathing, should be free and unimpaired, and notwithstanding the fact that at first sight it might appear that such a result was not to be arrived at in the closed helmet of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, yet the more carefully we study fine helmets of that period, which are complete and have not been tampered with at later dates, the more we shall be surprised at the great ingenuity displayed by their designers to attain these varied requirements, and to make the helmet fulfil the special purpose for which it was intended.

<sup>1</sup> Read at the Monthly Meeting of the Institute, November 1st, 1833.



When that mode of fighting which is termed hand to hand was in vogue, the protection of the hand was naturally a subject of much study on the part of the armourer, who had, whilst guarding it efficiently, to allow it free play in all the varied movements needed by it to wield successfully the weapons then in use, and we shall find that by dint of perseverance and many trials that object was finally attained.

It is not my intention to enter on a complete study of the subject, as the time at my disposal for preparing this paper did not allow of the research needed for that purpose, but I will first glance at the various developments of the gauntlet in this country as displayed in monumental brasses and effigies, and then briefly describe the actual examples of gauntlets exhibited at the Meeting of the Royal Archæological Institute, on the 1st November last, which, thanks to the kindness of Mr. Weekes and other friends, formed a much more complete series than I could have supplied from my own collection.

There is no indication of gauntlets in the armour shown in the Bayeux Tapestry; the hauberks have sleeves somewhat short and wide, but there is no defence for the hand.

The same short sleeves appear on the great seal of the Conqueror, where they barely reach the elbow. In the seal of Rufus the sleeves reach the wrist, round which they fit closely, and this sleeve is continued until the time of the Lion-hearted Richard, on whose great seal, for the first time the sleeves are extended, so as to cover the hand, the fingers being contained in one pouch whilst the thumb has a separate one for itself.<sup>1</sup> This kind of defence is well shown in the effigy of William Longespée, Earl of Salisbury, who died in 1226. (Fig. 1). In order that the hand might be liberated from the glove, an opening was left on the inside of the hand, and, from the representations in monuments and miniatures, it would appear that the glove was very generally worn hanging down from the wrist and the hand only slipped into it on the battle field. The brass of Sir Robert de Septvans, 1306 (Fig. III), and the numerous miniatures in MSS. of the thirteenth century,

<sup>1</sup> As Richard I. died in 1199 we may assign the invention of defensive armour for the hand to the closing years of the twelfth century.

show these gloves hanging from the wrists. This defence for the hand continued in use during the whole of the thirteenth century, but somewhere about the middle of this century the fingers of the mail glove were occasionally separated: the De Lisle effigy<sup>1</sup> appears to be the earliest example of this, and a very fine one will be found in the monument of William de Valence in Westminster Abbey.<sup>2</sup>

This pouch for the hand at the extremity of the sleeve of the hauberk cannot strictly be called a gauntlet, but it seems probable that before the end of the thirteenth century the discovery was made that it would be more convenient if the hand covering were separate from the sleeve, and thus the true gauntlet of mail came into existence. A curious monument in the church of Schutz, in Alsace, shows the back and front of the knight's mail gloves, which are hanging on his sword behind him. Although the treatment of the mail is peculiarly conventional, still, as the whole hauberk and chausses are treated in the same manner, we may assume that the back of the gauntlet was covered with chain or banded mail, and the inside was made of leather. (Fig. v).<sup>3</sup> The monument dates from about 1330, when other kinds of gauntlet were already causing the mail gloves to be abandoned. A gauntlet covered with scales, but of what material does not appear, is shown on the brass of Sir Richard de Buslingthorpe, which dates from about 1290 (Fig. II),<sup>4</sup> and gauntlets of leather appear on the Du Bois effigy about 1311,<sup>5</sup> and in France at least steel roundels were fixed on the backs of these leather gloves to give them additional strength.<sup>6</sup> Steel plates were already being put on to many of the more exposed parts of the mail armour, for it was found that a heavy blow with a sword or mace would be felt *through* the mail although it did not pierce it, and might do much damage, especially to the joints. Of course the knuckles were much exposed, and a heavy blow on them would cause a man to drop his weapon and thus place him at the mercy of his enemy. So the hand was of necessity an object of much attention with the armourer, and we soon find him covering it with ingeniously disposed

<sup>1</sup> Stothard's "Monumental Effigies," Plate xx, Edition of 1876.

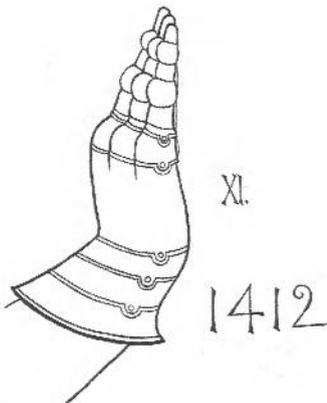
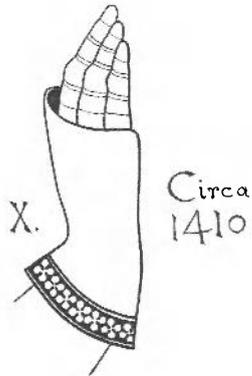
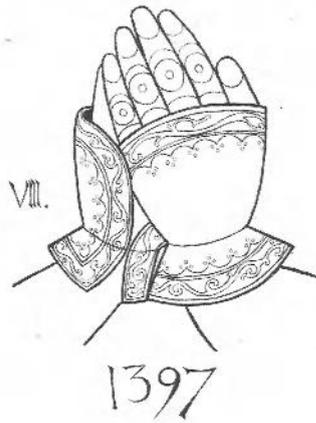
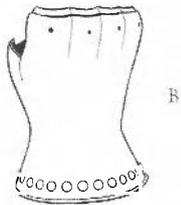
<sup>2</sup> He died in 1296. Stothard, Plate xlv.

<sup>3</sup> Schœpflin, "Alsacia Illustrata," tome II.

<sup>4</sup> Waller's "Brasses."

<sup>5</sup> Stothard, Plate LVIII.

<sup>6</sup> Viollet-le-Duc, "Mobilier," tome V, p. 450.



plates of steel, which were probably riveted on a leather glove. This kind of armour has been called splints, and it is shown on an effigy in Whatton Church, supposed to date from about 1325,<sup>1</sup> whilst beautiful gauntlets of this construction on an effigy in Ash Church, Kent, are combined with armour which indicates about 1336 as its date. (Fig. vi).<sup>2</sup>

Gauntlets made of plates of steel, however, would appear to have been used in Germany at an earlier date than this, for in a monumental slab in Schonthal Church they are seen hanging behind Albrecht von Hohenlohe, who died in 1319. (Fig. iv).<sup>3</sup>

The first step towards the true gauntlet of plate however is shown in the statue of John of Eltham, Earl of Cornwall, in Westminster Abbey, where the wrists still being of splints a larger plate covers the main portion of the back of the hand;<sup>4</sup> and in the effigy of Sir Roger de Kerdeston who died in 1337<sup>5</sup> we find in its complete form that make of gauntlet which was to remain in vogue with slight variation for over one hundred years.

The special constructive feature of this gauntlet is that a single broad plate of metal almost envelopes the hand from below the wrist to the knuckles which it covers and protects. It is hollowed in at the wrist assuming somewhat of an hour-glass shape. It is curved round the sides of the hand but leaves part of the palm exposed. Inside it was worn a leather glove, to the fingers and thumb of which small overlapping scales were attached, thus completing the defence of the hand.

An electrotype facsimile of one of the gauntlets of Edward the Black Prince, which still hang in Canterbury Cathedral, kindly lent by Mr. W. Huyshe and exhibited at the meeting, showed better than many words what was the construction of the gauntlet which first appeared about 1335, and only disappeared before the miton gauntlet a hundred years later. (Fig. vii, A & B, represents the front and back of the *broad plate* of this gauntlet divested of the lions and fingers.) The originals at Canterbury are of gilt brass, the leather gloves still exist in them, and the scales of the fingers are not fixed to the broad plate as

<sup>1</sup> Stothard, Plate LII.

<sup>2</sup> Stothard, Plate LXII.

<sup>3</sup> Boutell, "Brasses," 1847, p. 191.

<sup>4</sup> He died in 1334. Stothard, Plate LV.

<sup>5</sup> Stothard, Plate LXIII.

in this model, but to the leather gloves, the fingers of which are curiously adorned up their sides with work in silk.

It is natural that during the long existence of this type of gauntlet many variations in its details are met with. It is found with splint cuffs in the Ingham effigy<sup>1</sup> and in that of Sir Humphrey Littlebury about 1360,<sup>2</sup> but these are rather antiquated forms, at that date, than variations. An effigy in Tewkesbury Abbey about the same date has very long cuffs.<sup>3</sup> About 1374 these gauntlets began to be very beautifully decorated with chased metal work on the knuckles and finger joints as well as round the wrist and at the edge of the cuff. The effigy of Sir Thomas Cawne is a beautiful example of this date. (Fig. XIII).<sup>4</sup> Spikes called Gads or Gadlings often appear on the finger joints, and in the Black Prince's gauntlets small lions are riveted on to the knuckles. The brasses and effigies of the last quarter of the fourteenth century show us a profusion of beautiful ornament lavished on the gauntlets.

As has been said, the fingers at this time were not attached to the broad plate of the gauntlet, but it was usual for that part of the plate which covered the knuckles to be shaped on them so as to fit quite closely against the finger scales.

In 1397, however, we find a curious variation shown in the gauntlets worn by Sir John de Saint Quintin. The edge of the broad plate comes far over the knuckles, but does not at all fit closely to them. The diagram (Fig. VIII)<sup>5</sup> will show their form, and if we wonder where this strange fashion came from, we have only to look at the figure of Sir John's wife Lora, who lies by him, and whose sleeves reaching nearly to the first joints of her fingers, affect exactly the form of her husband's gauntlets.

This fashion lasted some time both for ladies and gentlemen, for in a brass in Kelsey Church dating from about 1410 (Fig. X)<sup>6</sup> we find even a more exaggerated form than the last, and a gauntlet of similar construction but shorter, is worn by Robert Hayton who died in 1424. Now the manifest defect of this gauntlet and of all of the broad plate type hitherto described, is that the point of a weapon

<sup>1</sup> Died in 1343. Stothard, Plate LXvi.

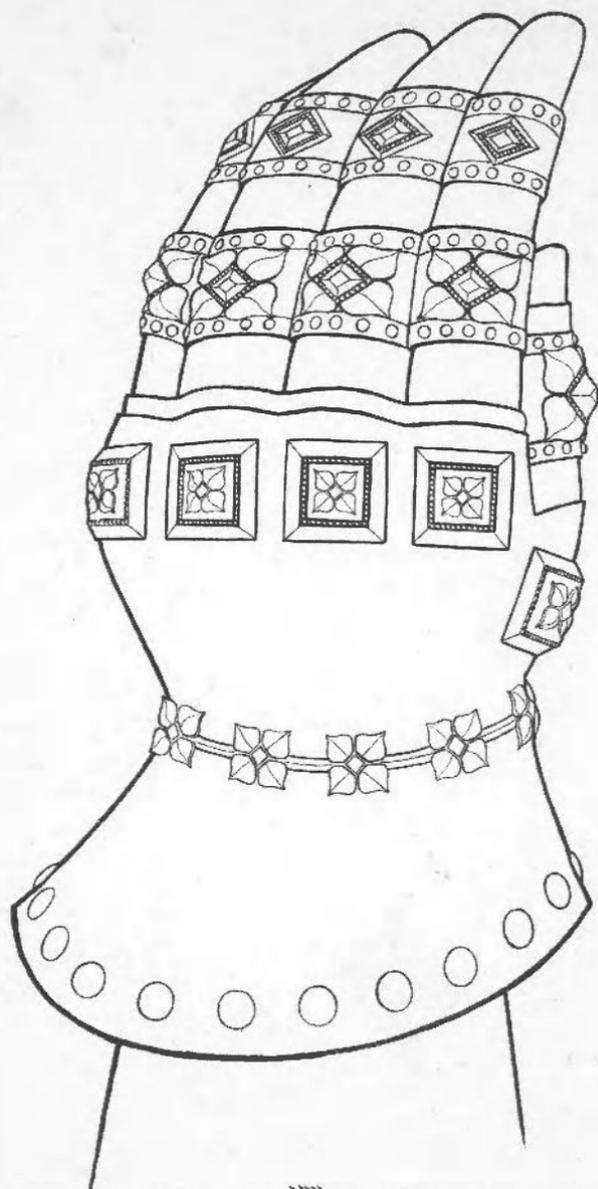
<sup>2</sup> Stothard, Plate LXXV.

<sup>3</sup> Stothard, Plate LXXIII.

<sup>4</sup> Stothard, Plate LXXVII.

<sup>5</sup> Boutell, "Brasses of England," p. 32.

<sup>6</sup> Boutell, "Brasses of England," p. 36.



XIII.

Circa 1380.

could enter the gauntlet between the scales of the fingers and the edge of the plate. In the Cerne brass, supposed to date from about 1380,<sup>1</sup> but which may be rather later, a rivet appears on the broad plate over each knuckle and on each scale of the fingers, and it is probable that the finger scales were riveted to the edge of the plate. The same feature appears in several brasses dating from about the year 1400. This construction, although it rendered the gauntlet more impervious to a thrust, had the grave defect of lessening the flexibility of the fingers, as they could not have the same free play when riveted to the covering for the back of the hand, which they had when independent of it.

To remedy this, an expedient was found which is the most marked constructive feature of the gauntlet in the fifteenth century. It consisted in separating that part of the plate which covered the knuckles, from that which covered the back of the hand. To this it was fixed by a rivet at each side, so that it had some play of its own, and to it was hinged in like manner the narrow plate to which the fingers were attached. The brass of Sir Thomas Swinborne, 1412 (Fig. XI),<sup>2</sup> is the first instance I have found of this construction, which occurs repeatedly in brasses after this date until 1433. It will be noticed in the diagram that the knuckle piece is jointed on the *inside* of the broad plate, and the cuff also is jointed so as to render it less stiff. It was not until nearly the middle of the fifteenth century that by hinging this knuckle piece *outside* the plate which covered the back of the hand, complete flexibility was given to the gauntlet, and here we reach the series of actual examples of gauntlets on the table at the meeting. But before describing them, one or two more variations deserve notice. The gauntlets of the fine statue of St. George at Prague, dating from 1375,<sup>3</sup> have very beautiful faceted ridges raised on the broad plate over the metacarpal bones, somewhat like the seams on the backs of modern gloves. Faceted ridges of precisely similar character appear on gauntlets in English brasses in 1400, as in that of Sir George Felbrigge (Fig. IX),<sup>4</sup> and continue in fashion until about 1415, when they are still

<sup>1</sup> Boutell "Brasses of England," p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Boutell, "Brasses," p. 55.

<sup>3</sup> Planche, "Cyclopedia of Costume."

<sup>4</sup> Boutell, "Brasses of England," p. 33.

seen on the effigy of Sir Ralph Nevill.<sup>1</sup> At this period, too, it was very usual to mark the nails of the fingers on the finger scales which covered them.

We have thus brought the broad plate gauntlet on for one hundred years from its first appearance, but about the year 1433 it suddenly makes way for a completely different kind of defence for the hands, and that is the steel miton gauntlet with a pointed cuff, the miton being a gauntlet in which the fingers are not separated one from the other.

The effigy of John Fitz-Alan, Earl of Arundel, who died in 1434,<sup>2</sup> has gauntlets of this fashion, which will be readily understood by looking at those on the brass of Roger Elmebrygge, dating from about the same time. (Fig. XII).<sup>3</sup> In Fitz-Alan's statue there is a reinforcing plate on the cuff and wrist of the left hand miton, and the mitons themselves do not quite reach to the ends of the fingers. The same peculiarity is occasionally seen on brasses, but is not usual after this date. This same type of miton, with cuffs of gradually increasing dimensions, appears on English monuments until 1480, when it takes a ridge across the knuckles as in the brass of Sir Anthony de Grey, and consequently becomes so similar to gauntlets exhibited at the meeting that these notes can be continued with their assistance. But it may perhaps be well, first to recapitulate roughly, the broad constructive landmarks in the progress of the gauntlet towards its final perfection in the fifteenth century.

At the end of the twelfth century we have the sleeve of mail continued so as to cover the hand. The mail glove continues in use throughout the thirteenth century, but about the middle of that century, the fingers are divided, and the glove made separate from the sleeve. With the beginning of the fourteenth century we find various experiments in the way of strengthening the leather glove with plates of steel, leading to the gauntlet of splints. By the widening of the plates on the back of the hand we are gradually led to the broad plate gauntlet which appears about 1335. This form of gauntlet progresses in beauty and decoration during the fourteenth century, but is not

<sup>1</sup> Stothard, Plate xc.

<sup>2</sup> Stothard, Plate cxix.

<sup>3</sup> Boutell, "Brasses of England," p. 39.

materially altered in construction until the beginning of the fifteenth century, when in the first place the fingers are riveted to the broad plate, and then complete suppleness is given by the separate articulation of the knuckle piece and the cuffs, thus leading to the form of construction used until the final abandonment of steel harness.

Before passing to the catalogue of the series of gauntlets exhibited at the meeting; a series which contained most of the forms taken by the gauntlet from the middle of the fifteenth century to the beginning of the seventeenth, I wish to call attention to a group of gauntlets of peculiar construction, the special use of which is not I believe generally known.

There were six examples of the form I refer to exhibited, a collection probably unique, four most interesting ones being lent by Mr. Weekes (Figs. 28 to 31), and two less perfect ones coming from my own collection (Figs. 21 and 22), whilst a seventh veryrare piece lent by Mr. Weekes (Fig. 33), probably belonged to a gauntlet of this class.

The especial features of these gauntlets are; firstly:—that they are all made for the left hand; secondly:—that their cuffs are always more or less tubular instead of presenting the graceful expanding curves usually found in the cuffs of other gauntlets; thirdly:—that their articulations are numerous and particularly supple, the rivets connecting the plates having very small heads and working in slots; and fourthly:—that the scales of the fingers and thumb lap over one another the reverse way to what is usual in other gauntlets, that is to say, they lap from the nails towards the back of the hand.

When I first obtained two of these gauntlets in Italy many years ago (Nos. 26 and 27, p. 287), I was of opinion that they had never belonged to suits of armour, but that they had been worn with ordinary sleeves. A man wearing an arm piece of steel would not need so long a cuff to his gauntlet, besides which the cuff is so straight and narrow that it would not work at all pleasantly on any vambrace, as the piece of armour which covered the forearm was called. I therefore thought that they might have been fencing gauntlets, and from their extreme delicacy of workmanship I assigned them to the sixteenth century.

When I saw Mr. Weekes' fine series of similar pieces, I asked him his opinion concerning them, and learnt that he attributed them to suits of armour of the time of James I, that is to say to the beginning of the seventeenth century, a period when a marked decline in the excellence of workmanship and construction of armour, even in the richest and most highly decorated examples, was making itself manifest. Having reason to know that Mr. Weekes' opinion on all questions relating to actual pieces of armour is of the utmost value, I remained for the time being content with his view of the matter, but the close examination which I made of these gauntlets whilst preparing this paper, and the confirmatory opinion expressed to me by a collector of armour of great experience who has long lived in Italy,<sup>1</sup> and who has seen and possesses various examples of these gauntlets, has caused me to return entirely to my original views concerning them:—viz. that they were never meant to be worn with suits of armour, that they are peculiarly Italian, and that they belong to a portion of the sixteenth century when the armourer's art had not as yet entered on its decadence.

A passage in Brantôme tells us what these gauntlets really were—he says that at Milan, “on tuait dans les duels beaucoup d'Italiens, bien qu'ils fussent armés de jaques de mailles, *gantlets*, et segretta in testa.” That is to say that the French killed many Italians in duels at Milan, although the latter were armed with jackets of mail, *gauntlets*, and steel skull-pieces inside their caps or hats.

Now it must be remembered that at this time the Italians mostly fought duels with the rapier and dagger. The guards of the rapier formed an efficient protection for the right hand, but the left hand, which held the dagger (the guard of which at that period consisted simply of a cross bar with a small ring on the knuckle side), was quite exposed, and hence it was covered with a gauntlet. This completely explains the fact that all these gauntlets are for the left hand, and also why the scales on the fingers, being exposed to the point of the enemy's rapier, were made to lap backwards, instead of in the usual way. These backward lapping scales are not usually found in ordinary gauntlets, because, they would have been very liable to

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Frederick Stibbert.

get hacked off had they been exposed to a cut from an axe or war sword, but they were admirably adapted to cause a thrust from the point of a rapier to glance off them, and in two of Mr. Weekes' examples there is a flange round the upper part of the cuff which would stop a thrust from glancing up the gauntlet and penetrating the arm above it. Indeed, each of Mr. Weekes' gauntlets of this description presents remarkable characteristics, which will be duly noted in the catalogue. My friend from Florence told me that occasionally the glove of these gauntlets was covered with mail on the inside of the hand, so that the duellist might be able to seize his enemy's blade, if disarmed of his own dagger, and this explains the peculiar formation on the inner side of one of Mr. Weekes' gauntlets (No. 24, Fig. 30), where some small articulated plates protect the muscle over the lowest joint of the thumb from being cut whilst seizing the adversary's blade, and Mr. Weekes tells me that he once saw a gauntlet of this class in which these plates were much more developed, so as to cover much of the palm of the hand. The rapier blades of this period, it is well known, although more adapted for foining than for slashing, still had two cutting edges, so that it would have been imprudent to seize them with the bare hand. There is a very curious chain mail covering for a glove in Mr. Weekes' collection (No. 28, Fig. 33) which I have little doubt belongs to this period, and which was probably sewn on the inside of the leather glove which lined a steel duelling gauntlet. It had long been a puzzle to Mr. Weekes and to me, and it is difficult to understand what other use it could have had than that now proposed. The fingers are much too narrow to be a good protection to the back of the hand, but if we assume that they were sewn to the inside of the fingers of the glove of a steel gauntlet, they are wide enough for all purposes.

I venture to think, therefore, that what I would term *duelling gauntlets*, may be regarded as a separate, distinct, and hitherto undescribed variety, and I shall anxiously look forward to meeting with further examples in collections at home and abroad, whilst should any such pieces come under the notice of readers of this paper, I shall be very grateful for notes concerning them.

## CATALOGUE.

## No. 1. Fig. 14.

Miton gauntlet for the left hand ; date about 1440. *Baron de Cosson.*

This is probably the earliest of the gauntlets exhibited. The highly raised points beaten up over the knuckles, and the toothed edge of the plate covering the tips of the fingers are remarkable.

A small protuberance over the extremity of the ulna, or outer bone of the forearm, well marked in this gauntlet, is worthy of notice.

If we watch this protuberance through successive gauntlets, we shall find it assuming very varied forms, and gradually becoming only a reminiscence of its earlier and really useful form. The thumb piece and cuff are wanting.

## No. 2. Fig. 23.

Miton gauntlet for the left hand ; date about 1460. *F. Weekes.*

This fine gauntlet came from Poland or Russia. The metacarpal plates are beautifully ribbed. The knuckles and the ulnar protuberance are raised into very acute points. The cuff is pointed, all the rivets work in slots and have large flat heads on the *inside* of the piece. The plates for the fingers and phalanges of the thumb are wanting, but have been replaced at an ancient date by chain mail, covering the fingers two and two. Curiously enough, the points of the mail rivets are turned outwards in the covering of the thumb and two of the fingers, and inwards on the piece that covers the other two fingers. The existence of plates at a previous date in the place of the mail is proved by the existence of the rivet holes for them in the furthest existing plate.

## No. 3. Fig. 15.

Miton gauntlet for the right hand ; date about 1470. *Baron de Cosson.*

This is a very fine gauntlet, of excellent workmanship. The play of the plates one over the other is remarkable, all the rivets, (which have rosette shaped heads), working in slots, so as to give the gauntlet wonderful flexibility in every direction. The cuff is pointed. The plates covering the metacarpal region, or back of the hand, have ridges beaten up in them, diverging towards the knuckle and finger plates, which are also ridged. The steel has that admirable hard surface and deep bluish lustre distinctive of fine armour of the fifteenth century. The thumb-piece and tips of the fingers are wanting.

## No. 4. Fig. 16.

Pair of miton gauntlets, German ; date about 1480. *Baron de Cosson.*

These gauntlets, although a perfect and unquestionable pair, bearing the same armourer's mark (a cross and a star  $\frac{+}{*}$ ), were bought a hundred miles apart, one at Munich, the other at Nuremburg, the one being polished and the other covered with rust. They are similar to No. 3 in their general forms, but their cuffs are longer, reaching half way up the forearm, and less acutely pointed. They are also of much thinner steel, but exceedingly supple in their articulations, the lateral motion of



the plates one on another being especially noteworthy. The tips of the fingers would not seem to have been covered with plate, but with chain mail sewn to a strap riveted on the inside of the last existing plate. The thumbs are wanting.

## No. 5. Fig. 17.

Miton gauntlet for the left hand, with fluted cuff, German ;  
date about 1510. *Baron de Cosson.*

This is the gauntlet of an early suit of what is called the Maximilian type. The knuckle and finger pieces much resemble those of the pair of gauntlets, No. 4, but the cuff is fluted, and goes completely round the forearm, whilst in the gauntlets previously described it only covered the outer side of it, being fixed by a strap on the inside. The cuff is no longer pointed, and the whole gauntlet is short.

## No. 6.

Miton gauntlet for the left hand, with fluted cuff, German ; date  
about 1510. *F. Weelkes.*

Very similar to No. 5, but much shorter.

## No. 7. Fig. 18.

Miton gauntlet for the right hand, with fluted cuff, German ;  
date about 1510. *Baron de Cosson.*

Similar to Nos. 5 and 6.

## No. 8.

Miton gauntlet for the left hand, with fluted cuff, German ;  
date about 1520. *Baron de Cosson.*

Similar in type to the three last, but much larger, and with the ridges on the plates covering the phalanges, less accentuated.

## No. 9.

Miton gauntlet for the right hand, entirely fluted, German ;  
date about 1525. *Baron de Cosson.*

In this gauntlet the plates covering the fingers are closely fluted, and the knuckle plate has a broad transverse twisted ridge on it.

## No. 10. Fig. 24.

Gauntlet for the right hand, fluted and engraved, German ; date  
about 1535. *F. Weelkes.*

The fluting here is still closer than in No. 9, there is an engraved band round the cuff, and the twisted ridge across the knuckles is very narrow. The whole piece is small and delicate in make. The fingers, thumb, and inside of cuff are wanting. It bears the Augsburg mark, a fir-cone.

## No. 11.

Pair of plain miton gauntlets ; date about 1535. *Baron de Cosson.*

Similar to the fluted miton No. 9 in form, but of plain steel.

## No. 12. Fig. 25.

Miton gauntlet for the right hand ; date about 1535. *F. Weekes.*

This is a finely made gauntlet of good proportions. The knuckle piece instead of the twisted ridge has an ornament composed of overlapping discs, hammered up in it with great effect, and the same ornament is repeated round the edge of the cuff, and on the last plate of the fingers.

## No. 13.

Inner piece of the cuff of a gauntlet ; date about 1535. *F. Weekes.*

This fragment is of fine workmanship, with a salient ridge running transversely across it, and with traces of engraving.

## No. 14. Fig. 19.

Pair of miton gauntlets, German : date about 1540. *Baron de Cosson.*

Of very fine workmanship and decoration, these gauntlets are large in size and quite complete. The cuffs which are boldly curved outwards, have at their upper edge a finely twisted rope, and they are decorated with a kind of honeysuckle pattern hammered up on them. The twisted ridge on the knuckles is particularly large and bold, and a second similar piece covers the first joints of the fingers giving great flexibility in closing the hand.

## No. 15. Fig. 20.

Large miton tilting gauntlet for the right hand, probably French ; date about 1550. *Baron de Cosson.*

For perfection of workmanship, this is about the finest gauntlet I have ever met with. It is formed to the shape of the hand in the most marvellous fashion, and its suppleness is wonderful. A maker of modern armour, Mr. Leblanc of Paris, once told me that it is a most difficult problem to design the curves of the edges of the plates of a gauntlet, so that they shall run back one over the other freely, yet closely, leaving no gap between them, and although this result is attained with wondrous perfection in all the fine gauntlets hitherto described, in none is its difficulty more apparent than in this gauntlet, where the metacarpal plates are extended so as to envelope the lower joints of the thumb. The salient ridge across the knuckles is boldly decorated somewhat like that of No. 12, the ulnar protuberance and a similar one on the thumb joint are twisted like a snail shell, the plates covering the phalanges are formed to take the exact shape of the fingers, and the finger nails are represented. In all the previous examples, indeed in gauntlets generally, with the exception of tilting ones, the thumb is separate from the gauntlet, and hinged on to it ; but here it is in one piece with it. It is probable therefore that this gauntlet was intended for tilting. The cuff is long and not hinged on the inside, but large enough for the hand to pass through it. It is attached to the hand portion by staples and pins, so that a different cuff could be used with the same hand, or a different hand with the same cuff.

## No. 16. Fig. 27.

Forbidden miton gauntlet for the right hand, ornamented with engraving, probably Italian; date about 1550. *F. Weekes.*

These pieces are of considerable rarity. Unfortunately this one is not complete, as the cuff and the plates covering the metacarpal region are wanting. The special peculiarity of this form of gauntlet is, that the plate which covers the finger tips is prolonged much beyond them, so that when the lance or sword was grasped, this plate reached back to the inside of the cuff, to which it could be locked by a kind of turning staple. It was thus almost impossible for the weapon to be wrenched from the hand. I have considerable doubts about the title *forbidden*, given to this piece by Mr. Weekes. Hewitt describes similar pieces, I think more correctly, as *locking* gauntlets, and they were probably recognised contrivances for preventing the knight in tournament from being disarmed, as they are found on several suits of armour, for instance the tilting suit in the Meyrick collection engraved by Skelton (vol. i, plate vi), and in those mentioned by Hewitt (*Ancient Armour*, vol. iii, p. 665). Viollet-le-Duc engraved a similar gauntlet in his *Mobilier* (tome v, page 459), and attempted to identify it with the *gagne-pain* of the anonymous author published by de Belleval in his *Costume Militaire des Francais en 1446*, but the gauntlet he engraves probably dates from the middle of the sixteenth century, and no proofs are offered in support of the supposed identification. In Mr. Weekes' example the knuckles are marked by ridges, and the piece is ornamented with engraving. It was formerly in the Gurney collection.

## No. 17.

Jousting miton gauntlet for the bridle hand and forearm; date about 1550. *Sydney W. Lee.*

This kind of gauntlet, called a *main-de-fer* in 1446 by the anonymous author referred to above, (de Belleval, *Costume Militaire des Francais en 1446*, pp. 10 and 68), protected the bridle arm and hand of the jousting, and was in use with slight variations of form, with jousting harness, from the date just named to the second half of the sixteenth century. It consists of a long tubular cuff, reaching from the elbow guard, and narrowing to the wrist, where it expands, enveloping the back of the hand to the knuckles and lower part of the thumb. The fingers are covered by from one to four plates, and the thumb by a few scales. De Belleval in his *Panoplie* (page 40), calls this form of gauntlet "le grand miton." It belongs exclusively to jousting harness, and was often used without a vambrace. Mr. Lee's example is a fine one, and very thick and heavy like most gauntlets of this class. The date assigned to this piece is only approximate, as these gauntlets were used during a considerable period.

## No. 18.

Gauntlet for the right hand, from a tilting suit, date about 1550. *Sydney W. Lee.*

A very large and strongly made gauntlet, noteworthy for the kind of pouch for the tip of the thumb, formed by the last plate of the thumb

piece, and for the fingers being scaled from the nails towards the back of the hand.

No. 19. Fig. 26.

Portion of black miton gauntlet for the right hand ; date about 1550. *F. Weekes.*

The box-like form of the knuckle piece in this interesting fragment is peculiar. A second piece, somewhat similar to that on the knuckles, covers the first joints of the fingers, giving great play in closing the hand, but a somewhat clumsy appearance when open. Part of the thumb exists, but the cuff is wanting. The date consequently is somewhat uncertain.

No. 20.

Cuff of a gauntlet with raised facets ; date about 1555. *F. Weekes.*

No. 21. Fig. 32.

Gauntlet for the right hand, Italian ; date about 1565. *F. Weekes.*

The workmanship of this gauntlet is of fine quality. It is ornamented with a delicately engraved band. Its most noteworthy feature is the inside of the cuff, which is formed of vertical splints riveted on leather. The last splint on the thumb side is continued by a long scaled thumb-piece. One finger is missing. This splint arrangement renders the gauntlet a very remarkable piece. In workmanship it much resembles the duelling gauntlets next to be described, and no doubt came from the same workshops.

No. 22. Fig. 28.

Duelling gauntlet for the left hand, Italian ; date about 1565. *F. Weekes.*

This piece came from the Meyrick collection, and it is engraved by Skelton (vol. ii, plate lxxix), together with another gauntlet then in the Meyrick armoury, which, whilst having an embossed cuff, presents exactly the same characteristics as this one, and was also, no doubt, an Italian duelling gauntlet. As already mentioned, these gauntlets are all for the left hand, have somewhat long and straight cuffs, the fingers are invariably scaled from the finger tips towards the knuckles, the rivets are small and the articulations very supple. At page 279 will be found the reasons which cause me to identify them with the gauntlets mentioned by Brantôme as being used by duellists at Milan in his day. This gauntlet is a remarkably fine example of its kind. It is decorated round the cuff with engraved lines in pairs, the scales of the fingers and thumb, which lap as mentioned above, are numerous and scalloped at their edges, and the posterior part of the thumb-piece is also scaled.

No. 23. Fig. 29.

Duelling gauntlet for the left hand, Italian ; date about 1565. *F. Weekes.*

This gauntlet is very similar to the last, except that the cuff is shorter and is hinged, so as to open when being put on, whilst in the previous example the hand had to be passed through the cuff to put it on. The scales on the thumb and fingers are similar to those of No. 22.

## No. 24. Fig. 30.

Duelling gauntlet for the left hand, Italian; date about 1565. *F. Weekes.*

In this example the upper edge of the cuff has a broad flange round it, to stop a sword point from glancing up the arm. The cuff is hinged, and the inside of it articulated in a very remarkable manner, so as to protect the muscle at the base of the thumb from getting cut when the adversary's sword blade was grasped. The finger and thumb scales are missing. The ulnar protuberance here reaches its most conventional form, being only represented by a diamond  $\diamond$  in very low relief.

## No. 25. Fig. 31.

Duelling gauntlet for the left hand, Italian; date about 1565. *F. Weekes.*

In this gauntlet only the outer part of the cuff has a flange, the inner part being curiously composed of vertical splints of steel fixed on buff leather. The scales on the fingers are of peculiar form and lap towards the nails, but they evidently do not belong to the gauntlet. There is no indication of a thumb-piece.

## No. 26. Fig. 22.

Duelling gauntlet for the left hand, Italian; date about 1565.

*Baron de Cosson.*

The finger scales are wanting in this piece, which is small and exceedingly delicate in its make. The edges of the plates are all scalloped and decorated with engraved lines. The glove was originally sewn in, as is proved by the row of small holes at the upper edge of the cuff. The rivets all work in slots. There is no trace of a thumb.

## No. 27. Fig. 21.

Duelling gauntlet for the left hand, Italian; date about 1565.

*Baron de Cosson.*

This piece is similar in make to the last, but shorter in the cuff, it is of blackened steel, very beautiful in form, and yet more wonderful in its suppleness. The plates are not scalloped, but have engraved lines round them. The cuff does not open in either of these two gauntlets. There are the same holes for sewing, round the top of the cuff.

## No. 28. Fig. 33.

Lining of a duelling gauntlet (?), made of finely riveted chain mail; date about 1565.

*F. Weekes.*

This piece is very peculiar and interesting. The reasons for describing it as above are given at page 281. It can only have been used sewn on to a glove, and is much more suited to the inside of a glove than as a covering for the back of the hand, as it is rather narrow to be an efficient protection to it.

## No. 29.

Gauntlet for the left hand, unpolished ; date about 1570. *F. Weekes.*

A gauntlet of good workmanship. The cuff at this date gets more pointed, and spreads out wider at the top. There is a ridge across the knuckles.

## No. 30.

Pair of gauntlets ; date about 1570. *Baron de Cosson.*

Very similar to No. 29, but polished.

## No. 31.

Pair of elbow gauntlets, plain steel ; date about 1575. *Baron de Cosson.*

These gauntlets reaching to the elbow were used with Allecret armour by lightly armed horsemen. They served at once as vambrace and gauntlet.

## No. 32.

Elbow gauntlet, black with sunk bright steel bands ; date about 1575. *F. Weekes.*

These elbow gauntlets were used during a considerable period, so that the date assigned to them is only approximate.

## No. 33.

Pair of elbow gauntlets, black with raised ornaments in bright steel, date about 1575. *Baron de Cosson.*

Similar to the last two numbers.

## No. 34.

Pair of gauntlets engraved and gilt, Italian ; date about 1575. *Baron de Cosson.*

These are ornamented with what is termed Pisan engraving, consisting of bands engraved with trophies, &c. The cuffs are very broad at the upper part and pointed. They are not hinged. From this period the construction and workmanship of gauntlets, and indeed of all armour, shows a marked decline.

## No. 35.

Portion of a gauntlet for the left hand, engraved and gilt, Italian ; date about 1575. *F. Weekes.*

This has belonged to a small sized suit, but is fine in the quality of its engraving and gilding. It consists only of the plates covering the back of the hand.

## No. 36.

Cuff of the right hand gauntlet belonging to the same suit as No. 35. *F. Weekes.*

Unfortunately the gilding has been cleaned off this piece, but it is exactly similar to No. 35 in engraving and size.

## No. 37.

Pair of gauntlets ; date about 1580.

*Baron de Cosson.*

Exactly like No. 34 in form, but of plain steel.

## No. 38.

Pair of black gauntlets with the original gloves in them ; date about 1590.

*Seymour Lucas.*

These gauntlets belong to a suit formerly in the Meyrick collection and engraved by Skelton (vol. i, plate xxxv). It is there called demi-lancer's armour, and the date 1592 assigned to it. The original gloves in these gauntlets render them very interesting.

## No. 39. Fig. 34.

Gauntlet for the right hand ; date about 1605.

*F. Weekes.*

For its period this gauntlet is of fine quality. The cuff expands much and is straight at its upper edge, round which the original scalloped velvet edging still remains. It was formerly in the Gurney collection.

## No. 40.

Pair of gauntlets ; date about 1610.

*Baron de Cosson.*

Plain steel, with cuffs very broad at top but not pointed. Poor in quality ; the design and construction of armour by this time was deplorable.

## No. 41.

Elbow gauntlet for the left hand, black, probably English ; date about 1625.

*F. Weekes.*

Large and clumsy, but curious from the fact that the scales of the fingers and thumb lap toward the hand.

## No. 42.

Elbow gauntlet for the left hand, black, probably English ; date about 1625.

*F. Weekes.*

Still larger and heavier than the last. It has a flange on the inside of the elbow. The fingers are scaled in the usual way. These gauntlets cover the whole of the elbow.

## No. 43.

Elbow gauntlet for the left hand, made of scales of thick buff leather ; date about 1630.

*James D. Linton.*

Formerly in the Meyrick collection, and engraved by Skelton (vol. ii, plate lxxix), where it is described as German. These last three elbow gauntlets were all for the protection of the bridle arm, such gauntlets would have been much too heavy and inconvenient for the sword arm.

## No. 44.

Oriental elbow gauntlet of very beautiful perforated steel work. *F. Weekes.*

I cannot assign a period or country to this piece, my knowledge of oriental armour being very limited, but it was a superb piece of work and evidently of ancient date. The same remarks apply to the three next pieces.

## No. 45.

Oriental elbow gauntlet of ribbed steel inlaid with silver. *F. Weekes.*

## No. 46.

Oriental elbow gauntlet of ribbed steel ornamented with applied brass. It has a miton and thumb of combined scale and chain mail. *F. Weekes.*

## No. 47.

Persian gauntlet of chased steel with a chain and splint hand. *F. Weekes.*

## No. 48.

Facsimile in gilt electrotype of one of the gauntlets of the Black Prince, still hanging over his tomb in Canterbury Cathedral. See page 275. *Wentworth Huyshe.*

## No. 49.

Facsimile of one of the lions riveted on the knuckles of the gauntlets of the Black Prince, chased up exactly to imitate those that still remain on the original gauntlets. *Wentworth Huyshe.*

In conclusion I wish to thank Mr. Weekes for the loan of his valuable series of gauntlets, Messrs. Huyshe, Lucas, and Lee for their kindness in lending objects for exhibition, and especially Miss Marion Bonomi for the great aid rendered to me in preparing the diagrams which illustrated the paper when read, and which now form Plates i, ii, and iii accompanying it.