It has been apparent throughout this book, as it is in everyday life, that colour plays a tremendous part. Not only has it often a great significance, but its presence or absence must also have a considerable effect upon the minds of the people at large. One cannot help thinking that if women were to dress as a whole in the same quiet, or let us say solemn, tints which are characteristic of men in their everyday life, how much we should lose. Yet that there is a craving for bright colours is shown in every direction, and that they are attractive to those who do not themselves have an opportunity of wearing them is also obvious. The High Church clergy in this country make use of the coloured vestments that had developed in the Roman Catholic Church previous to the Reformation, and which have been proclaimed illegal.

The new universities vie with the older seats of learning in the colours which they choose for gowns
and hoods. It is merely a question of expense which prevents the fancy-dress dance from being more common than it is. The pageants which have been held in various parts of this country, and the profits which have been made in many cases, bear out what we have said. Men, as shown by the red coats which they don for hunting and golfing, the colours in which they ride steeplechases or play hockey, or the dresses in which they bathe, seek as far as possible during their leisure hour pursuits to go back to bright array.

Plays also are popular which are cast in the times when picturesque attire flourished or which borrow it from Oriental countries. The significance of colour is exceedingly far reaching. The ordinary liveries of Royalty in this country are red; the red shirt of the followers of Garibaldi, the red cap of Liberty in the French Revolution, the red rose of Lancaster, call to mind great struggles. The platelayer, it is said, is instructed to wear a red tie so that on emergency it may be used as a danger signal. A red ribbon worn in the hair of a girl in some places on the Continent shows that she is engaged to be married, and it is with a red rag that the chulos in the bull fight enrage the bull. The term "born in the purple" alludes to this colour having been that adopted by emperors and kings in the past. Yellow is a favourite colour with gipsies; the women wear yellow kerchiefs and yellow beads, while the men favour yellow neckties. Mr. Yoxall points out that this colour was
worn by mediæval Jews, and had a contemptuous or degrading significance. We have seen that yellow has been chosen as a mourning colour in Oriental countries, and possibly it was adopted on some particular occasion by gipsies like the black worms that we have mentioned in the lace of military uniforms, and has never been entirely left off since.

Among savages, yellow comes next in popularity to red, and it is said that young children are also fond of red, but are inclined to prefer yellow. The latter colour is not so stimulating as red, and this is well shown by the fact that the red light used in photographic works was found to cause so much mental irritation on the part of the workers that it has been abandoned in many cases in favour of orange. As regards the preference of older persons, it has been found that schoolgirls are more precocious than boys in the discrimination of colours, and never prefer orange to any other colour, yet they choose yellow rather than green, and usually than violet, but never prefer it to red or blue.

As age goes on, male students shift their liking towards the violet end of the spectrum which is the favourite one with men, while women keep to the red. Blue is associated in this country with the boat race held between representatives of the two old Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and blue is usually taken to represent the Liberal side in political elections. The blue blouse of the butcher is characteristic,
and, as we have found, is a still better instance of the survival of a trade costume than that seen in the case of servants. The colour, it is said, was chosen, as blood stains are not so noticeable upon it as upon other tints. A black habit is that which the clergy adopt when not engaged in religious duties, while white has for centuries been used by them when conducting services. The same two colours, if we can so call them, are to be found in mourning, and to them a man is now restricted when he appears in ordinary Court or evening dress. The use of colour merely as a distinguishing mark without any deeper origin or special significance is so general that we shall touch upon it, and recall one or two instances with which we have previously met.

The gorgeous dresses of the Masons and the bright green scarfs of their humbler brethren, the Foresters, are further evidences of the love which civilized man still retains of dressing himself up. It is only but little less strongly developed apparently in him than it is in his children and in savage people.

We pointed out that red, although a special character of the British Army, is very far from being the universal colour of the uniform. We have had to deal with blue, buff, white, and black among the other colours that are to be seen adorning the bodies of our soldiers. The colours of heraldry no longer appear on our persons, except when we wear favours such as ribbons of red, white, and blue that come
from national flags, and here we may recall that the standards of our regiments are called their “colours,” and illustrate not only regimental but national history. The part that colour plays in the hoods and gowns of academical dress has on more than one occasion occupied our attention. Various coloured veils serve to deferentiate the sisters of a religious order, while the ribbons and mantles of the knightly orders serve a similar purpose. It seems a great pity that at the present day the chapters or meetings of these Orders are seldom if ever held, and it would surely be interesting and useful, as well as enlivening, for certain occasions to be created on which the public might have an opportunity of seeing more of the dresses which have been handed down to our own times.

It is true that the King has of recent years opened Parliament in person, and glimpses may have been had of him in his state robes by a privileged few, but surely some opportunity should be found of having more pageants which are real and where there is no need for any make-believe. Besides having the advantages which we have urged would accrue from the bringing of a little more colour into our lives, such meetings would also have a practical result, and be exceedingly good for trade.

It is obvious that certain costumes, particularly the gay peasant dresses of the Continent, suit the style, complexion, and colouring of those who wear them.
In races like our own, where we have all kinds of stages between the very fair blonde and the very dark brunette, the question of the choice of colours from an artistic point of view is important. There is also the question of surroundings to be considered, though nowadays it is not every one who can afford the time, as the late Mrs. Haweis did, to visit the rooms in which she was invited to spend an evening, so that the colours of her costume might be arranged to harmonize with her temporary surroundings.