

ure of man It is the custom that proclaims woman's elevation from primeval subjection to man. Wherever the broad sunlights of civilization quickens the triumphant march of science, throws new lustre of light around the votaries of literature, or removes the scales of mediæval ignorance from the vision of legislators, the pleasurable practice of flirtation flourishes with its merry laughs, winning glances and coquetish strategy.

When the darkness of the middle ages hung over a benighted world enwrapping man in a gloomy cloud of bigotry, and religious as well as political slavery, such a felicitous mode of enjoyment as flirtation was unheard of. No refined feelings or tender sensibilities swayed the human breast. Woman was considered as a mere dependent instrument of man's pleasure, subject arbitrarily alike to his esteem or neglect, totally incapable of uttering one word of complaint under the most degrading seclusion from society.

It was only when the tree of liberty had taken root in the monarchical constitutions of Europe protecting with fostering care by the shade of its lofty branches the rights of man from the burning rays of tyranny. When the sails of a liberal commerce whitened every ocean and established an inseparable connection and tie between the great family of nations was the custom of flirtation inaugurated by the polished denizens of our modern cities.

It was during the prosperous reign of Louis XIV in the courts of France that it was ushered into existence. It was in the frescoed salons of Versailles that the star of woman's influence and social power appeared with radiant light above the horizon before darkened by a cloud of bitter prejudice obscuring the brilliancy of woman's charms. Before the gilded halls of St. Germain had been a scene of aristocratic prostitution, daily infidelity to matrimonial vows, woman was a mere blank in society, a beautiful form harboring often a gigantic intellect, but condemned by rude custom to silence in the presence of man.

Woman, doomed to hopeless seclusion, had no pride to cherish. Virtue, a mere abstract ideal, becoming dormant