

and dying by desuetude was certain to melt away before the artful intrigues of man when its possessor accidentally at long intervals was thrown into his company. But when woman, with her powers of entertainment, with the gem of unbounded influence rooted in every modest action, assumed her proper station as man's helpmate, and the sterner sex, refined, polished and civilized by her magic charms, as if by a smelting process, with homage recognized her true character, then, and not till then, did the practice of flirtation rise a source of enjoyment to man.

Not till criminal connections at European courts had vanished in general under the healing influence of ideas of enlarged propriety, was flirtation, the great bugbear of modern puritanism, introduced into the world. Such was the origin of this abhorred custom. Such are the weighty reasons that establish a presumption in its favor. In slavery, in barbarism, in ignorance, unknown; in polite society, in courts and cottages, in peerage and poverty, enlightened by the rays of Christianity, it receives the homage of a goddess. It is a luxuriant growth, springing from a soil fertilized by civilization, the natural and necessary inference is that it is beneficial and consequently justifiable. It is generally acknowledged that any practice whose radical principles originate from the influence of modern civilization is justifiable, and whenever the propriety of such a custom is discussed, the whole burden of proof devolves upon the objector, because its origin from christianity and modern improvement and the fact of its uninterrupted existence for two centuries is a sufficient vindication until a defense of it becomes impracticable by irrefutable objections. Then until this basis has been undermined, we have only to remain on the defensive, fortified by the popular presumption in our favor until the stronghold becomes untenable from the irresistible attacks of our opponents. But even if our position is impregnable this does not preclude us from adding to its natural strength by additional reasons. The very nature of flirtation appears in con-