

of reform in dress? We deride the fantastic costumes donned by our grandmothers and great-grandmothers, and then heartily unite in endeavoring to introduce either those or more absurd styles at the present time. We condemn and marvel at the prices they paid for a gown, a head-dress, or a trinket, and then deliberately turn round and expend ten times as much on our own dress, for there never was a time when fashion was more clamorous for silk and satin, velvet and laces, and, worst of all, conspicuous and costly jewellery, than the present, and it requires an amount of fortitude which few possess to break away from the trammels which society constantly imposes upon them. We would greatly like to enlarge upon this point, but that would necessitate another verse being added to our "old song," which that "want of space" before alluded to positively forbids, so we hasten towards a conclusion, which brings us to the discussion of a recent event in Canadian society which ought to rouse every right thinking man and woman to reflection—nay, to action.

It is a matter of regret, and ought to furnish material for thought on the part of even the frivolously inclined, that when the Marquis of Lorne and Princess Louise arrived on Canadian soil that we could find no more elevating way by which to celebrate their coming than the inevitable ball, which simply means that people are invited to assemble in a 70 x 90 room to caper and frisk over the floor till morning dawns, and the greater the display of frivolity in the line of fashionable dress, the greater is considered the success of the entertainment, and yet we are a "practical" people—nay, we pride ourselves on being an intellectual people. But humiliating as it is to be ruled as by a rod of iron by the despot Fashion, it is a far greater humiliation to our colonial pride to be subjected to a code of rules in reference to the very cut of the dresses to be worn at the ball given by us to our distinguished guests. We don't profess to be an authority on such momentous matters, but our barbarian idea of etiquette suggests that in good society the guests do not dictate to the hostess, nor *vice versa*, regarding matters of dress, etc. There was a feeling of disapproval on the part of the majority, but few were courageous enough to do more than express disapproval in word, none dare express it in

action, judging from the number of half-dressed ladies who graced the ball with their presence. The solicitude manifested for the welfare of the invalid was rather amusing. Fearful that the zeal of the latter to appear costumed in the manner which the quintessence of good breeding declares to be absolutely necessary in order to show a proper degree of respect might overbalance the judgment of the weakly one, an amendment is added to the first order, "graciously" allowing all such to appear in a dress "cut square" in the neck. Then, as if suspicious that our "strong-minded" Canadian girls might take an unfair advantage of such an unprecedented permission, the proviso was made that this could only be done by obtaining a certificate from a medical man!!! Our indignation rises to a point known as "boiling" just here. Are we mere children to be thus ordered to wear this or wear that? "But you know," the cringing *devotee* of fashion hastens to explain, "they were accustomed to that style in their own land," etc. It seems to us that true politeness ought to have enabled them to have endured the trying ordeal of receiving ladies whose necks and arms were covered, and that the good breeding which renders it necessary to appear oblivious to things which often appear strange might have been brought to bear on that occasion as well as others. To say nothing of health, which is only a minor consideration with fashionable people, how very unbecoming is the low-necked, short-sleeved dress to the majority who possess necks of a length which might well excite envy in the breast of a crane, while the most lively imagination fails to discover why it should be regarded as so *very respectful* to appear with the neck and arms *uncovered*, but so *very disrespectful* to appear with the hands *not covered*. In fact the whole matter appears so utterly frivolous as to be unworthy the notice of sensible people, were it not, unfortunately, a fact that it is probably on account of that class winking at, and indulging in, such undignified recreations that these evils spread so rapidly. We have only to refer to the inability of nine-tenths of those who countenance and participate in fashionable follies such as we have mentioned to *afford* it, to be understood, but unquestionably the very "flower of the land" is being drawn into the vortex