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# THE QUEBEC MAGAZINE

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## *On Compulsory Laws respecting Marriage.*

Wealth and power what are you worth,  
To pleasure if you give not birth?

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**H**EAVEN bestowed upon man the finer feelings of the soul, with a view to augment his happiness, and to render his situation in life the more pleasant: yet in consequence of those erroneous notions which refinements in society engender, these very feelings are the cause of the greatest distresses to which human nature is subjected. To such a weak and fallible creature as man, the sympathetic endearments, arising from reciprocal affections are necessary, before his mind can experience the highest degree of gratification of which it is susceptible. In times of distress he seeks for some sympathetic bosom, that shall take pleasure in administering the balm of comfort; and when the heart exults with joy, it feels a dreary want, until it can find some one who will participate with him in that peculiar bliss. Every emotion of the heart proves that man was not made to be alone; and that if ever he hopes to attain to happiness, it can never be found in solitude, far less in the company of those whose dispositions, desires, and modes of thinking, are not of a nature congenial to his own.

These are truths that will readily be admitted by every one who is young and unhackneyed in the ways of men; but as age approaches, these sympathetic affections seem to subside; the pleasures of social intercourse diminish; and the love of wealth and power acquire dominion in their stead. Aged persons in general, greedy of power, and callous in the impulses of kindness, imagine that wealth and grandeur alone are sufficient to gratify every desire of the soul. Forgetting their own rule for judging while young, they wish to deprive others of the same privilege they valued, once so highly themselves; and thus are led to dictate with the most inflexible authority to their children as to the choice of a companion for life; the most momentous transaction in which any man can ever be engaged.

Nor is this propensity confined to one country, or to one set of people