

"But that age of vulgarity has passed, and is succeeded by an age of refinement—wherein palpitation of the heart would ensue on greater exertion than walking through a quadrille, and ladies can only become giddy in the sanctioned whirl of the sentimental waltz.

"Though I seldom go out now to see 'how the world wags,' I am half sorry that 'L'Allegro' has yielded so quietly to 'Il Penseroso;' but I console myself by the reflection, that when the latter shall have held sway for a short period, the *beau monde* will tire of the

'Pensive men devout and pure  
Sober, steadfast and demure,'

Who keeps her

'Wonted state  
With even step and musing gait  
And looks commercing with the skies.'

They will turn her adrift, and joyfully recall the nymph that brings

'Jest and youthful jollity  
Quips, and canks, and wanton wiles,  
Nods, and becks, and wreathed smiles:'

And they will again

*Blithely* 'trip it as they go  
On the light fantastic toe.'

"In the meantime, while anxiously awaiting this millennium, I would wish to be informed what class of gents holds the greatest sway in society. In my time, the blues and the greens ruled conjointly."

"If so," said I, "things have quite altered since then, for no colours dare now appear but red and black; the others have been exiled from courtly places and sent to weep in dust and ashes. Until now the red coats have had the advantage, but the blacks are beginning to rally, and will, I think, in the end win the day. I question if, on close inspection, these cavalier red-coats be found after all deeply read."

"Well, since you do not seem to value your antagonists very highly, how happens it that they have in a measure thrust you civilians out, since it must rest solely with yourselves to maintain your places?"

"It does not depend entirely upon our own abilities; for, though we may bravely defend our position, the misses form a powerful phalanx, and whatever side they choose to join is sure to be successful. I blame them for allowing themselves to be so dazzled by a little bright cloth as in their blindness to array themselves against us. Positively some of them have so completely lost their eyesight that they cannot even recognize us as casual friends during a truce." (Kind reader, since you have been so indulgent, I am tempted to ask whether you have not

at times enjoyed a laugh in your fur gauntlets, at being unceremoniously cut by some haughty damsel?)

"Oh, lie upon you!" sang out the Squire, "to blame the sweet creatures, I thought you were gifted with more gallantry than that. Why, to my own knowledge, the sex is so improved since my day, that they now seem to acquire learning intuitively, and I consider the change an admirable provision of nature, saving both teacher and pupil a great amount of unnecessary trouble. Only look at their possessing a finished education at fourteen, when we thought eighteen years the shortest period in which a young lady could be fitted for a woman,—and then deny that it speaks highly for the mental activity of the present age! This allows them more opportunity of seeing the world, which they take good care to improve. Time such a sluggard with others, does not hang idly on their hands; for their taper fingers are constantly employed in some pretty ornamental stitching, far better suited to their delicate touch than the coarse domestic needlework of our antiquated flames. Then they are taught to play the piano, and sing an accompaniment—advantages seldom within reach of their ancestors, each of whose muse, like Spenser's

'Whilome did maske

As time her taught in lowly shepherd's weeds,'

Being 'enforst' to pipe away on simple oaten reeds. In days of yore, young ladies were silly enough to pore over books known by the denomination of *useful*; but those at present in the market know much better how to increase the brilliancy of their conversation by culling the flowers of the most fairy-like and unearthly novels, and by committing to memory scraps of newspaper poetry, full of pathetic sensibility. The bare mention of this species of literature has inspired me, and I must out with

Sailing in a cockle-shell,  
I must steer my vessel well,  
Lest I strand it on a rock,  
Wrecked, dismayed, by the shock.

Has not the imagination, even in these few lines, taken an amazing flight? In fact our age is a very poetical age, and our young ladies most poetical young ladies!"

"Stop, stop, Squire!" exclaimed I, suddenly pulling out my watch, "I must be off; even now I shall be late."

"Then you will only be the more fashionable!" answered he, bowing me politely out.

Montreal, December, 1840.

#### MOTIVES.

THE two great movers of the human mind are, the desire of good, and the fear of evil.—*Johnson*.