

**MADRE NATURA VERSUS
THE
MOLOCH OF FASHION; A
SOCIAL ESSAY**

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Madre Natura Versus the Moloch of Fashion; A Social Essay by John Leighton

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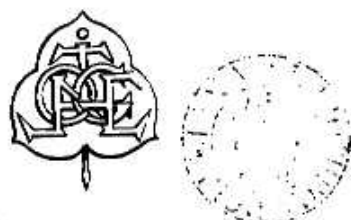
DECOR INEMPTUS.

(In Title-page.)

THE MANTUA-MAKERS' ARMS.

On a shield *sable*, a Corset *proper*; crest upon a wreath of roses,
an Hour-glass *or*, typical of golden hours wasted. Supporters,
Harpies: the dexter "Fashion," crowned with a chignon
or, corsetted and crinoletted *proper*, her train
being decorated with bows, and the wings with
scissors; the sinister, "Vanity," crowned
with a coronet of pearls and straw-
berry leaves, bears the wings of
a papillon, eyed *proper*, the
queen à la Paon. Motto,

"FASHION IS
DEATH!"



TO

JOHN MARSHALL, ESQ.

F.R.S., &c. &c.

PROFESSOR OF SURGERY, AND ART ANATOMY,
TO THE ROYAL ACADEMY AND TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND ART.

Subscribe this little Book

AS A TOKEN OF

LONG-STANDING FRIENDSHIP.

LUKE LAMNER.

LONDON, 1874.

MADRE NATURA

VERSUS

THE MOLOCH OF FASHION.



B

'The Age'—
'Body,'
'Form,' and
'Pressure.'

the pernicious effects of a grand social error, is our earnest desire; and even if we cause a thinking few to pause before they immolate youth and beauty at the shrine of vanity, we shall be amply remunerated.

The sentiment enounced by some would-be Theophrastus of the *Siècle Louis XIV.*: "Il y a autant de foiblesse à fuir la Mode, qu'à l'affecter," was in that day considered a very convenient and expansive axiom, there can be little doubt. It seemed to embody an elasticity of meaning calculated to suit everybody. It was charmingly accommodating, and without the slightest cynical ill-nature in its mode of expression or opinion.

By those whose affluent or easy circumstances enabled them to prefer the weakness of affecting the Fashion to the weakness of shunning it, and who had a predilection for sayings that furnished them with a semblance of rational authority for its indulgence, we may readily suppose it to have been a somewhat favourite mode of

retort of the votaries of Fashion to all who then declaimed against them.

*Fashion, the
child of
Society.*

But a much more decisive dictum, often heard in the present day from the lips of our English fair—"You may as well be out of the World as out of the Fashion,"—is indicative of the attainment of a more determinate opinion upon the matter; derived doubtless from the more advanced notions of modern society, and from the more generally spread subserviency to Fashion of the female mind in our land and times. That the greater earnestness of opinion expressed by this more modern saying was most lamentably proved correct in the very converse of the sense intended, during the over-long tyrannous reign of a Fashion but recently laid aside, may certainly be taken for granted, since a somewhat considerable number of those who therewith most assiduously affected to be *in* the Fashion, were prematurely put "out of the World" by it;—disqualifying them for the performance of their duties to Society,

*Crinoline
Mania, 1862.*

in a more summary and terrible manner than any perversion of clothing yet devised by the ingenuity of the milliner for the ever ready dupes of her specious handicraft.

We allude to the victims destroyed by wearing hoops and crinoline. There are many that escaped from death, who to this day bear evidence of the sad custom of using aids to distend the dress, carrying terrible brands, in the form of scars where the flesh has been seared, and contracted joints where the bones have been broken, derangements of the system by which chronic aches and pains are continued to the end of existence.

Let it not, however, be imagined from these premises that we are of those who declaim against all luxury in dress and ornament in the fair sex, when consistent with their rank and station in life—with that further regard for the æsthetic sentiment that evinces a cultivated standard of taste—and last, though not least, with that view to the conservation of the health