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## THE CANADIAN Illustrated News.

HAMILTON, JULY 4, 1863.

## WHERE BRITISH STRENGTH LIES.

Britain, where does your great strength lie? It lies in the greatness which is made up of many small things. Let us pass some of them in review, some so apparently small as to escape ordinary observation.

On a summer day of 1862, we saw Bombardier Macdonald of the Royal Artillery, whose name we did not then know, in a public room of the hotel where he was quartered at St. Catharines. An American deserter, wearing the uniform of the United States army came in. Seeing the British soldier he expressed a lively happiness; told that he was a native-born citizen of 'York State,' how he had deserted, how he had only an hour before escaped across Niagara by the railroad cars; and assumed by tone and speech that 'citizens of St. Catharines,' and British soldiers, who were not friendly to the United States as he had heard, would be glad to see him, and more who were coming. He took a chair and seated himself beside the Royal Artilleryman.

Macdonald, without remark, passed to the opposite side of the room. The American soldier followed, and inquired why the other would not talk with him. 'You are a deserter,' was the reply. 'But I am not a British deserter; I am come from the United States; I am a native-born American.' 'You should have been true to your country and your flag. Whatever flag a soldier enlists

under, there lies his duty. Go away, I cannot hold conversation with a man who sees no shame in deserting his country's service.' So spake Bombardier Macdonald. It was then we inquired his name, and ascertained that he was at St. Catharines drilling Volunteer Militia, and belonged to No. 4 Battery of the Royal Artillery stationed at Hamilton.

When some bad British soldier deserts from Canada, American newspapers give him fame as a hero. At Rochester the city council gave an entertainment to three, and their arrival was published as a joyful event. The three were sent to the army of the Potomac next day, where they perished. And so at Detroit; the newspapers were jubilant in 1862 over one 'brave fellow,' as they termed him—'brave' because he had deserted from London, C. W. in woman's clothes, and got across the Detroit river. We, who write these words have personally seen several hundreds of American deserters, perhaps as many as would make a battalion, arrive in Canada within the last two years, and have not seen either soldier or civilian of this country, give them welcome. Some have pitied and relieved the wants of those who were starving; but none have applauded them as deserters.

The British army is sound to the core. Bombardier Macdonald is its type. Intensely faithful to the crown and executive government from principle, it is reliable for any emergency, from the commander-in-chief to the drummer boy. Deserters from the British service are usually depraved men, who have been repeatedly guilty of offences. They are extreme exceptions to a rule. The rule is fidelity to the British flag and contempt for the disobedient, the criminal, and the faithless fugitive.

The difference which is the most markedly distinct between Americans of civil life, and the British people of civil life, is, that intelligent natives of Britain are not content with knowing the history and institutions of their own country. They inquire, and learn and appreciate whatever is practically good in the institutions of America, and of other countries. Intelligent Americans, a very few such as Washington Irving, N. P. Willis and Edward Everett, excepted, take pride in not knowing British institutions; or of only learning them by the light of fugitive sedition, or treason, or still baser crimes and criminals. Intelligent natives of Britain endeavor to obtain exact information, if, in society, or in writing for current literature they discover themselves to be uninformed on some topic, or about some public man or historical place, or event in America.—The intelligent Americans of a similar social and intellectual class, take pride in displaying their non-acquaintance with names, titles, or history of British public men, places and events. They assume it to be manly and worthy of free citizens of the Republic to be inaccurate or ignorant about British politics and government.

United States newspapers have just informed the world of an intelligent American, fresh from visiting England. He was in the House of Commons and has related whom he saw there. When he has occasion to name a titled personage the rank is mis-stated as a matter of course, in proof of his 'independence.' What was it to him whether a Cecil was a 'Sir,' or a 'Lord'? He saw one however, and 'quite a number' of other youthful members of the aristocracy in the House of Commons 'who were there,' he concluded, 'because, they could not be kept-out.'

One of the primary elements of national strength in Great Britain is the presence of the junior aristocracy among the social orders of the people. If 'independent' republicans will condescend to look at the reports of the cricket matches published in this issue of the *Canadian Illustrated News*, they may observe the name of a brother of that Lord Robert Cecil, whom the American visitor saw in the House of Commons. By visiting Hamilton, they may see that Lord Cecil of the Rifle Brigade, and other sons and brothers of Lords, mingle freely and on equal terms of play in the amusements of the private soldiers and non-commissioned officers. If they read history they will discover that the scions of British aristocracy are inured by athletic exercises in education to endure hardship; and that they are foremost in danger on land or in sea; that by the so-

cial position in which they are born, they are educated to the conservation of the national integrity and honor, no matter whether in party alliances they may be ranged as Whigs or Tories.

The eyes of the American was directed in the House of Commons, to the 'seats below the gangway,' and Peter Taylor, member for the town of Leicester was named to him as one of the 'thoroughly independent' men who gather on those particular seats. We have known Peter Taylor many years, and accept him as a fair type of the British Radical member. As a private individual he is as morally respectable as the general run of wealthy London merchants. In politics he is anti-this, anti-that, anti-everything; nothing under the sun satisfies Peter Taylor. He being the head of a firm of London merchants who contract largely for the products manufactured at Leicester, a few of the leading manufacturers by control of the poorer voters, can return him or any other man to parliament.

In the first winter of military service in the Crimea, 1854-5, the British army was inadequately supplied with warm clothing, and camp comforts. Dr. Andrew Smith, head of the Medical Department had not sent a sufficiency of medicines because, as he excused himself to a House of Commons Committee, he had been, 'of late years, incessantly drilled into retrenchment and economy.' And so to the music of that political cry ten or twelve thousand men, perished. There was a demand for warmer clothing. The hosiery manufacturers of Leicester and their London merchants contracted largely, government in the exigency consenting to almost any extravagance of price demanded by these 'economic radicals,' whose members, 'sit below the gangway' in the House of Commons. On the ship-loads of hosiery and flannels arriving in the Crimea, bales did not correspond to patterns, the shirts, stockings and mitts of boys were riven in vain attempts to force them on the bodies of grown men. And because Leicester manufacturers and the London merchants had deceived government and defrauded the army, the full-grown manly soldiers were exposed to the rigors of winter half naked, and tortured horribly with frost-bitten limbs; and the graves of the Crimea and Scutari were filled with thousands of dead who might be this day alive.

Mr. Roebuck's radical constituents of Sheffield, in like manner furnished tools of cast iron instead of steel and wrought iron, to fly in shivers, when the soldiers, half clothed, were digging the trenches before Sebastopol, or in making roads to carry up the fraudulent supplies from Balaclava. In like manner, Mr. William Shaw Lindsay, who also 'sits below the gangway,' obtained third parties to hire old and defective ships to government as military transports, while he declaimed against those vessels in the House, thereby running up the freights for his best ships to an extravagant figure, until Sir Charles Wood at last confronted, and for a time silenced him, with the statement that the Admiralty had discovered that Mr. Lindsay was the owner of the defective transports which he so loudly condemned in his place in parliament.

The young members of the aristocracy, whom the American saw in the House of Commons, belong to a class who spared neither fatigue, nor suffering, nor life in the battles of the Crimea, as in every battle of every war; a class in whom the honor and stability of the British Empire are safely entrusted by the consent of the common people. They belong to a class who have legislated, when the manufacturers resisted, to protect women and children in factories, and promote the industrial rights of working men. The 'independent members below the gangway' are mostly, though not all, representatives of crotchets, of hobbies; like Peter Taylor, satisfied with nothing in Church or State, at home or abroad, on the face of the earth or under the earth; but who will exact the last penny in loom rent from the 'stockingers' of Leicester, before paying their miserable pittance of four-pence or five-pence a dozen for hose.

The same class of men are the central figures of political agitation in America, and fill Congress not to its advantage, where there are none of the hereditary class educated to conservatism, and practical legislation, to modify or contend with them as in Great Britain. In America, and largely so in Canada, every such central man is the representative of a seething, buzzing, bustling mass of office seekers. And all political questions are by them subordinated to the policy of expelling incumbents from office, and placing somebody else there, who by the time they have learned executive and departmental duties, are expelled to become in their turn political agitators.

It is in the hard hands of the working

men, and in the inherent respect which the mass of the British people entertain for the aristocracy, who in turn are custodians of the honor, safety, and best interests of the nation, that the strength of the British Empire lies.

## LIMITS OF FICTION.

The Editor trusts that writers of poetry or of fiction, whose productions are at present in his hands will accept the remarks he is about to make in that friendly spirit in which he desires and intends to write them.

As long as human beings, in their varied and changing phases of personal conduct, in their oddities, comicalities, whims, fancies, passions, loves, jealousies, hatreds, sins, heroic daring, exalted morality, or reverent subjection to religious sentiment, are the dramatic persons acting in a story, they are legitimately within the limits of an imaginary Tale. That is, if the construction and conduct of the Tale be conducive to moral instruction, or intellectual amusement, and if it present only the evil fruits of vice and does not indecently display vicious deformities. We are not apprehensive of any contributor offending in the direction of immorality. Writers who would pollute, do not offer such manuscripts in quarters where they know they would be spurned.

But we are troubled in the opposite extremity. And extremity it is. It is so immeasurably, so transcendently extreme that the Deity is made a person of the drama, and actor in the fictitious story. This is a transgression in the direction of profanity, which cannot be permitted in the pages of the *Canadian Illustrated News*. A writer so pure in mind, so devout in Christian sentiment, as the author of 'The Cross of Pride' never viewed the passages which we object to in that light. That we feel assured of. A human actor in a story may, by pressure of conscience, or ecstasy of pious sentiment, be represented as praying without trespassing beyond the due limit, so long as the action remains personal and human. But if, to advance the story, for mere amusement, or at best for an intellectual and moral exercise, the author takes the Supreme Being, and the Saviour, into the conduct of the fiction, the Holy Trinity bearing and answering the prayer, and pouring out on the imaginary mortal the blessings of saving Grace, all of which actions human and Divine, are involved in the conversion of the equivocal Ellinor Harcourt, the limit permissible to mortals in relation to Deity is altogether exceeded.

Then, whether a divorced wife, such as Lady Vivyan, may marry again, she being innocent of the major crime alleged against her, but not innocent of offences against her husband and the marriage vow of a very grievous nature, such as her toying with sin in the person of Count Altenberg purposely to aggravate her husband, is a question which is not settled by the 'revealed word of God,' as is affirmed in the story. Human interpretation in one church differs on that point from human interpretation in other churches.

## EDITORIAL NOTICES.

The story of Eola will close in the next number, after which some manuscripts may find a place which are now awaiting a decision difficult to arrive at. The stories, if well composed in plot, are mostly very commonplace, or without that vitality of character in the imaginary persons which secures the reader's interest and sympathy. Or, if better delineated in character, they are defective in dramatic plot. Try, somebody, try all, and give us good tales in which persons, places, events and scenery shall be Canadian.

E., (Guelph). If your 'Prayer of a Penitent' be a fiction, you profane the holiest privilege of mortals. If it be such as you have really poured out in supplication to God, reserve it among the inner secrets of the soul. It is a daring indulgence of vanity to intrude your secret prayers upon the public observation. Learn from the Gospel how they who ostentatiously prayed in public places were rebuked. Learn how our blessed Lord taught us to enter the closet; and having entered to close the door and pray in secret. We trust this answer will suffice for several others who have versified their prayers and asked us to publish them. The poetical sentiment in E.'s prayer is above the common level. Her hand-writing is beautiful. We infer from these that she is an amiable, youthful, gentle being, who though possibly incurring educational or family displeasure for trivial errors, incident to youth or childhood, cannot have been guilty of any deep offence in the face of Heaven which would make her 'Prayer of a Penitent,' an out-pouring of real anguish.