

Our own Medium.

NO. IX.

THE SHADOWS.

DEAR GRIP,—

"You must not think that a satiric style
Allows of scandalous and brutish words;
The better sort abhor scurrility."

If there is one more glaring evil than another to which you as the *Public Censor* should apply the scalping knife of keen criticism, it is that which may be called the low tone of political morality that characterises the daily press, not only of your city, but of all the large centres in your Dominion. The example, unfortunately, thus set spreads into your rural districts, and unless frowned down upon and put a stop to, must end in debasing all public life and men amongst you. The language made use of during the past few weeks by your two leading papers, the *Globe* and *Mail*, in our day would have resulted in the sending of both papers to "Coventry." How talented men, guiding the opinion of a great Dominion, can condescend to such petty warfare, astonishes us, and we congratulate ourselves we lived in an age of the world's history when "good breeding" and "politeness" were as essential to the press as to the thorough gentleman. Your papers seem to go on the assumption that only two kinds of men can succeed as public characters, "men of no principle but of great talent, and men of no talent but of one principle—that of obedience to their superiors." One side is the *talented statesman*, but a Charter seller; on the other is a *stone mason*, but an implicit follower of a newspaper editor, the man behind the throne, and to prevent the success of either side, they mutually resort to the lowest of all weapons *scandal* and *scurrility*, with what result last Thursday's proceedings bear evidence in part. Musing on the facts thus presented, your medium fell into what you would term a day dream, and the following strange vision passed before his mind. Methought I had travelled from some distance along a straight well paved avenue, lined on each side with statuary displaying the finest characteristics of the human mind and virtue, and which I saw was styled the *English Avenue*, when I suddenly found myself traversing a morass of great dimensions, beset with devious paths so narrow that it was with the utmost difficulty that a foothold could safely be secured. Wondering how such a dreary scene could be connected so closely with the splendid avenue I had left, I discovered it was styled the "*Field of Canadian Politics*," and had yet to be reclaimed from its wildness, and improved as years rolled on. As I continued my journey I could see the little paths around me crowded with numerous wayfarers, who jostled and roughly and rudely accosted one another, often even resulting in blows, and ever and anon some one or another, losing their foothold, would fall into the treacherous beds and sink utterly from sight. These scenes astonished me, but I was still more astonished when attracted by a crowd in the centre of this huge morass. I wended my way thither, and saw what was being done. A large, white marble figure, of almost dazzling purity, and so finely chiseled as to seem almost a speaking, living being—was placed in the centre of a small oasis, and reared itself majestically above these wayfarers who, collected from the bye-paths, stood around it. On the pedestal were engraved the words, *Honesty of Purpose, Integrity, Christianity*. The sight of this figure seemed to drive these creatures wild, and out of the bogs around—the bog of *scandal*, of *personal abuse*, of *vituperation*, of *lying*, of *scurrility*, and others of a like stamp—with noisy anger they collected mud and threw the same at the figure; the mud seemed to stick for one minute, then fell away, leaving the place as spotless and as pure as it was before it was defiled. Wondering at the sight, I found on surveying the statue, that within it was heated by the *fires of Truth*, which permeated its whole being as it were, and rendered it proof against the malignity and hostility to those who would defile it. Meditating—I awoke.

Trusting to find a better spirit and a higher tone animating the press in the future, and trusting, dear Grip, that it will not be necessary to allude again to this message, I am still

YOUR FAMILIAR SPIRIT.

MR. SIMPKINS' EXPERIENCE.

Grip,—Sir: I desire to communicate to you a brief account of a strange dream I had on the night of the 29th inst. I will not dwell on the doings of the day, for I suppose it passed with me, much the same as with my unfortunate neighbours. But during the night, sir, I had a wonderful dream—an offspring, no doubt, of the unusual excitement and business. Having retired to rest at a late hour, I was not long in falling soundly asleep; and while I slept, I dreamed; and, behold, a dozen news-boys assailed me on

all hands with cries of "*Globe-hereyouare now-ow!*" and, "*Get the Mail-ail!*" as is their wont. I thought I purchased a copy of the latter paper, and looked at the date. It was January, 30th 1874. I turned eagerly to the Editorial column, to see what they had to say about the previous day's work. I expected to find something about how their opponents had dealt corruptly, unfairly &c., but to my surprise, and Sir, my unfeigned delight, I found an article which remains vividly fixed on my mind to this hour *verbatim et literatim*. It was as follows:

"YESTERDAY'S CONTEST.

"The polls closed last evening after an exciting contest, and victory perched upon the Reform banner in all three constituencies. As we have just said, the battle was warm; we desire to add that it was also generous and fair. It may be considered an expression of public opinion, as nearly as that is attainable under our circumstances. We do not desire to say anything harsh or uncharitable—we presume the best men have been elected."

I need hardly say, sir, that I was painfully disappointed when, in wheeling suddenly about to express my pleasure to a friend, I encountered something that brought me to my senses, and the whole affair floated off as the baseless fabric of a vision.

Yours,

JOHN SIMPKINS.

AN UNFORTUNATE POLITICIAN.

DEAR GRIP,—I know you are always ready to help the unfortunate. Oh! list a moment to my tale. For twenty-five years I have been a politician. First I edited a Reform paper, and for the only good editorial that ever appeared in it I came very near being tarred and feathered. To have peace of mind I sold that paper. It was always my wife's ambition that I should be either an M.P., or hold a Government office (as she considers those positions respectable), so, at the next election I persuaded my brother-in-law to propose me as a candidate at a Conservative meeting; but unfortunately, when I rose to make my speech, and felt in my pockets for the notes I had so carefully prepared—they were not there! I commenced without them, and for three minutes that audience was spell-bound—then my memory failed me, and I sat down. A wretch in the crowd cries out, "When he turned his coat he lost his notes."

For three years I served as clerk in a post office; during all that time I attended a Conservative Club, weekly; then I tried for a vacant office, but somebody wrote and told that Charter-seller John A. that I had once edited a Reform paper, and the office was given to somebody else. Since then I have tried for various government offices without success, and now, alas! I am on the verge of ruin; I can't even get five dollars for my vote, as in days gone by. Politics have been my ruin. If I had been a blacksmith for twenty-five years I might now be enjoying prosperity. Let my tale be a warning to others.—Yours,

AN UNFORTUNATE.

CITY CELEBRITIES.

DEAR MR. GRIP,—Though I live in the country, I hope I am not dead to the interests of your great town, nor am without ambition to know its justly celebrated men. I came to Toronto last week, and dropping across young JENKINS, I put the question to him point blank—"twas my way sir, point blank—"Can you show me the celebrities?"

"Come, HARRY," he said, slapping me on the back, "I know every one. Come down King Street and I'll point them all out to you. There," says he, pointing to a dapper man, with his little feet in ladies' prunella boots, and the smallest hands I ever saw, "that is GEORGE BROWN." I observed him, sir, observed his black curly locks, his affable smile, and the foppish way he played with his eye-glass. "And who is that with him?" I enquired, noticing a large, jolly, rollicking man, who might have played FAUSTAFF without padding, and the heartiest laugh, and the most genial set of features I ever beheld.

"That," says he, "is PATTESON of the *Mail*. Good-natured fellow, nothing mean about him. His only fault is, he is too fond of religious tea-parties, and, poor fellow, he doesn't know a horse from a cow."

I had now one burning ambition. I longed to see the famous BEATY. Who has not read his Demosthenic speeches, and imbibed wisdom from his utterances. Having seen this modern Cicero I could die content. We passed the *Leader* office and there he was, loling gracefully against the ancient door with a blue shooting jacket and brass buttons, a Dufferin tie and diamond studs. He was smoking a Partaga, while speaking French, with a well-known foreign Count! He is the handsomest man I have seen since I left my own parts, and they do say his finish is quite Parisian.

After this I felt exhausted, and JENKINS and I had a chop and a glass of beer. The next day I saw some more celebrities, and I shall let you hear from me about them.

Yours obediently,

HARRY HODGE.