

For the Pearl.

ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTIONS.

It has often been with me a source of surprise that in this community, where literary taste has received so powerful an impulse in the formation of scientific and literary institutions,—so little of its spirit is infused into the original contributions to the periodical Press. While we have weekly lectures, rich in style, and replete with information, on the most interesting departments of human knowledge,—the Press is either looked upon as an unfashionable organ through which to communicate thought, or a culpable indifference exists among the leading minds of the community to the growing importance of our Provincial Literature. When it is considered honourable, by the most eminent and talented men in Great Britain, to employ their powerful pens in the promotion of literature and science, surely it need not be further urged on those who have the ability in this Province, to follow so noble an example. In these days of form and fashion—and especially in Halifax—almost every attempt at improvement requires the connection of the name or influence of the rich or talented to make it popular—and if the vigour and nerve of our literati, were once infused into the cause of literature, our youth would, with an enthusiastic spirit, apply their energies to the development of their mental resources.

The studies of our young writers have long been diverted into an improper channel. Every novice in composition, who may have read Junius, imagines the stormy sea of politics to be the proper element over which his genius may expand, and after fluttering awhile in his upward flight, he finds his pinions shaken, and sinks at last into the mighty depths over which he vainly attempted to soar. With the most shallow conception of the profound subject he is endeavouring to elucidate, he apes the dictator, and substitutes scurrility and invective for correct reasoning and common sense. If the time and opportunities, thus uselessly frittered away, were applied in literary pursuits—in the production of essays of a literary character and tendency—a healthy tone would be given to the mind, and the exercise would call into action powers, which otherwise would remain passive or dormant. First attempts, naturally, may possess a looseness or weakness of style, but this should not deter the aspiring student; for these faults would soon be remedied by care and application, and the first efforts of some of the master-spirits of literature have partaken of the same character.

But to bring this subject more closely to the point. Has the establishment of the Mechanics' Institute in Halifax increased the respectability of our periodical press? Have the lectures, delivered with so much ability, elicited any contributions from any of the members who weekly assemble there? No;—the wonders of science, and the subjects of general interest, discussed within its walls, though abounding in themes of exciting interest, seem but to share the passing attention of the moment. No effort is made to retain the impressions they produce, and the public generally receive only a summary of the lectures through the agency of a circumscribed editorial.

The Literary and Scientific Association, also—a very respectable and praiseworthy institution—has as yet bequeathed nothing to the general treasury of literature. Surely if its members wish to excel in the art of Public Speaking, they must first become acquainted with the elements of literary composition; and among the various interesting subjects discussed among them, a choice selection might be made for the public eye. Let not diffidence check their ardour for improvement; for although a presuming confidence may disgust, a retiring diffidence too often acts as a total check to all honorable exertion. If the intelligent young writers in our midst will not arouse their energies, our literature will soon bear the impress of that leaden dullness, so characteristic of our present social condition. The riches of the intellect, unlike the miser's glittering hoards, depend not on the fluctuations of circumstances; and though we may not keep pace with the gigantic strides of steam, or with the growth of general improvement, we may in the rudest but unfold the beauties of literature, and derive a pleasure unfelt by the gorged sensualist in the sumptuous palace.

A LOVER OF LITERATURE.

For the Pearl.

LECTURE ON LIGHT.

Pictou, December.

On the last evening of meeting the Rev. John McKinlay read a paper on the Chemical property of Light. He exhibited several original experiments which reflected much credit on his researches. The lecturer is favorable to the corpuscular theory, and proved by several ingenious experiments that oxygen is necessary to its development—if so, it goes far to prove the undulatory theory incorrect. He said the phosphorescent appearance of the sea was not caused as had been supposed by animalculæ, but by the Iodine which salt water held in solution.—This he proved by exhibiting a bowl of water in which soap made from marine alkali had been dissolved—and so soon as the room was darkened and

the solution agitated, an appearance really resembling that above mentioned was observable.

After the paper had been read—which occupied rather more than an hour—a very interesting conversation took place, during which some highly interesting remarks were made by James Dawson, Esq. and others, respecting the power of some animals to emit light at pleasure. Mr. Stiles said he had made a series of experiments himself on the Firefly, and had uniformly observed that oxygen was given out by the insect each time that the light was emitted. Mr. D. B. Fraser made some remarks upon the magnetising property of violet coloured rays when light was decomposed by the prism, and showed the society a very delicate needle which he had succeeded in polarising with the violet coloured rays from flowers—this novel and scientific exhibition excited a great deal of interest. He also showed another in which polarity had been produced by covering it with a pigment of a violet colour. These effects, he observed, were produced in no other part of the spectrum, and all other coloured paints had failed to produce the slightest magnetic effect.

The discussion was the most animated and important that we have ever had, and was exceedingly interesting from the vast amount of original research that was displayed. The subject for next evening was announced from the chair to be—On the formation of Coal, with some remarks on the Albion—Cumberland—New Brunswick—Prince Edward's Island and other coal beds in the provinces, by Martin Wilkins, Esq.

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THE LAST SONG.

A LEAF FROM THE FORT-FOLIO OF A BOOK WORN.

Must it be? Then farewell!
Thou whom my woman's heart cherished so long,
Farewell! and be this song
The last, wherein I say, 'I loved thee well.'

Many a weary strain
Never yet heard by thee, hath this poor breath
Uttered of Love and death,
And maiden grief hidden and hid in vain.

Oh; if in after years
The tale that I am dead shall touch thy heart
Did not the pain depart,
Beshed, over my grave, a few sad tears.

Think of me still so yo
Silent, though fond, who cast my life away,
Daring to disobey
The passionate spirit that around me clung.

Farewell again!—and yet
Must it indeed be so?—and on this shore
Shall you and I no more
Together see the sun of summer set?

For me, my days are gone!
No more shall I in harvest-time prepare
Chaplets to bind my hair,
As I was wont: oh, 'twas for you alone!

But on my bier I'll lay
Me down in frozen beauty, pale and wan,
Martyr of love to man,
And like a broken flower, gently decay.

TYPE-WASHING.—The Fort's Gazette, in a second article on the new method of washing type by means of ammonia, carbonate of ammonia, or solution of black ashes, applied to the form by means of a sponge instead of the brush, states that one objection has occurred to this plan, owing to the extremely caustic properties of this ley destroying the sponge used in laying it on. To obviate this (it proceeds) we made trial of a solution of caustic soda, prepared in a similar manner, and found that it cleared away the ink as effectually as the stronger alkali, and was not so liable to waste the mop in the operation. It has also this most essential recommendation, that it is only one-half the price of the other. RECIPE.—Take one pound of soda, three-quarters of a pound of recently slacked lime, and two gallons of rain or river water; mix them well together; boil for ten minutes in a clear iron or earthen vessel; pour into a bottle or other vessel which can be accurately closed; allow it to lie over for a day or two to settle; then pour off the clear liquor into another close vessel for use. The part of the liquor left adhering to the carbonate of lime may be obtained by throwing the wet lime into a funnel, the throat of which is partially obstructed by tow, and pouring hot water upon it; this will force down the residuary portion of the solution into the vessel, into the neck of which the funnel has been placed. The sponge mop should be soaked with it, and gently drawn once over the face of the letter. The form is then cleansed in the usual way by water.—Scotsman.

A CONTEMPTIBLE OBJECT.—There is not a more disgusting object in the world than a vulgar, ignorant person, in the possession of wealth, and making use of his golden influence to oppress the poor, who are in every respect, his superiors.

THE PEARL.

HALIFAX, FRIDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 29, 1838.

The following official document by Lieut. Col. Airey shows that the American Brigands have not yet abandoned their vile, murderous projects in reference to Upper Canada. One instance of savage barbarity is related by Col. Airey which we hope for the sake of our common humanity, is not correct. Later accounts concerning the treatment of the body of Lieut. Johnson by the Prescott invaders have proved that the former reports were untrue. Perhaps the Col. may have been misinformed with regard to the mangling of the corpse of Asst. Surgeon Hume, although we must admit that men who can engage in the work of blood against their unoffending neighbours are prepared for any diabolical act.—

EXTRACT OF A DESPATCH FROM LIEUT. COL. AIREY,
34TH REGT. TO THE ASSIST. ADJT. GENERAL AT
TORONTO,—DATED,

"AMHERSTBURG, 4th Dec. 1838 }
12 o'clock, at Night. }

"I have the honour to acquaint you for the information of his Excellency the Major General Commanding, that a party of Brigands amounting to 350 men, as has been stated to me by the prisoners taken and now lodged in Sandwich Gaol, landed this morning about daylight a little above Windsor Ferry, about nineteen miles from this post and about three from Sandwich.

"They immediately set fire to a hired house used as a Militia Barracks, a short distance out of the village, which was burnt to the ground.

"They also set fire to and burnt the steamer Thames which, in consequence of having within the last few days burst her boiler, was laying at a small wharf, close to the above house, without any body in her, preparatory to being repaired.

"Captain Sparke, of the Incorporated Volunteer Companies, and some Militia under Colonel Prince, immediately turned out from Sandwich and proceeded against these ruffians, and after a few exchanges of shot, dispersed them, the Brigands crossing the fields and taking to the woods, where Col. Prince did not consider it prudent to allow his men to follow them.

"On the first intimation of the landing, which was effected by the United States steamer Champlain, Col. Prince informed me of it. I immediately sent up Capt. Broderick, 34th Regt. and one hundred men (in waggons) who had been ready all night, to move at a moment's notice, and one nine pounder brass field gun with a detachment of artillery.

"This party arrived at 11, A. M. and immediately proceeded in pursuit, but the Brigands had so dispersed towards the woods, that nothing could be seen of them, except in one boat crossing the river, which was fired upon by the gun, and one man killed and one wounded.

"The pursuit by parties of militia in the woods is still going on, but up to three hours ago only nine persons had been taken and are now lodged in Sandwich Gaol.

"It is with great regret I have to report that Staff Asst. Surgeon Hume, was killed by these ruffians early in the morning. He went close up to them, seeing them drawing up in line three deep, with white crossbelts on, imagining them to be Provincial Militia, when he was shot dead. His corpse was afterwards mangled and both his arms broken.

"The Erie, United States steamer, with a detachment of the United States troops on board, was very active in trying to cut off the Brigands, and take prisoners, and fired several shots at them.

"I rode up to Sandwich this evening and collected these details, but have not yet received the report of the proceedings from Col. Prince—but the number killed on the part of the Brigands, amounts by Col. Prince's verbal statement to twenty-five; wounded, unknown—but I saw three wounded amongst the prisoners, and it is stated that several were carried off by their own party.

"On the part of the Militia there were two men burnt in the Barracks and one shot.

"During the time I was at Sandwich General Brady sent over two gentlemen, Judge Ingersoll and Mr. Elliott Grey, from Detroit, to state that it was the positive intention of the Patriots to make an attack in force upon Amherstburg this night.

"I have consequently withdrawn Capt. Broderick's party from Sandwich, especially as I do not suppose they will renew the attack there so soon."

A LOVER OF LITERATURE, in another column, calls attention to a subject of much interest to ourselves. We must candidly confess that in regard to original contributions for the Pearl we have been sadly disappointed. Appeals we have made, but they have been lightly regarded. Whether 'a lover of literature' will be more successful than ourselves, remains to be proved. Nothing would gratify us more, than the publication of fine original articles in the Pearl. That there are persons in this com-