

# THE GRUMBLER.

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WHOLE NO. 54.

## THE GRUMBLER.

"If there's a hole in a' your coats  
I rede you tent it;  
A chief's among you taking notes,  
And, faith, he'll prent it."

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### PROVINCIAL SPOUTING APPARATUS No. VIII.

#### I. KNOWLEDGE TAXED.

In spite of all remonstrances the obnoxious duty has been imposed on books. By a vote of 61 to 43, a premium has been given for ignorance. Let us look at the list. Mr. Gould votes against the duty and thus raises himself 50 per cent. in our esteem. A man who, though illiterate, is doing his best for the education of himself and others, has great claims to our respect. Amongst the upholders of the duty we find that the erudite Gowan is willing to sacrifice books to jewellery; Fellowes, in spite of his partiality to the Albany Directory has no love for literature in general; Ferguson follows his illigant papa; A. P. McDonald, "don't think that them books is'nt no sich a blessing as people is apt to think;" while Playfair only sighs that the "Wellington Despatches" will not be exempt. Sidney Smith, of course, "goes in dead right agin sich hifalutin stuff as books, especially grammars and all them 'ere." The fun of the thing is that by a little clamour, Mr. Galt has been induced to exempt "Bibles, Testaments, and devotional works" from the duty. Now, what are devotional works? Pope's Essay on Man? Young's Night Thoughts? Is Cowper devotional? and will Paradise Lost pass muster? Where will Bailey's Festus stand, and will the "Lamplighter" be taxed? What about Bunyan, and Tupper, and Charlotte Elizabeth? Will Chapin's Universalist Sermons be considered devotional? or is it intended to test the devotion by an orthodoxometer?

The whole duty is a humbug, and we are only thankful for the exemption as a step back to rectitude. We think, however, that common decency should have prompted Sidney Smith and A. P. McDonald to have added Murray's Grammar to the free list; for though not strictly devotional, it would, if studied by them, tend to protect the religious feelings of the reporters from sore temptation. It is no use protesting any further against this outrageous duty; the small end of the wedge is inserted, and a precedent has been established which future Inspector Generals will not fail to use against the interests of knowledge and education.

#### II. GOWAN'S OMNIBUS.

Great is Gowan of Leeds and Granville. His five principles and twenty-five resolutions are "prodigious," but they are sadly misunderstood and unappreciated. The only consolation we can offer to the

suffering Solon is the consideration that men of genius are scarcely ever valued till their ashes repose in the tomb of their paternal ancestors. Milton and Burns, and all the great "poets" were neglected whilst alive; and we can only trust that like them Gowan's posthumous fame will make him chuckle in his coffin. We put it to Mr. Thibaudean and those other ungenerous men who carped at this intellectual Brogdignagian, if it was fair to treat the midnight labours of the worthy Theban so contemptuously? Take the Hudson's Bay question alone, and consider what an amount of coal oil must have been expended in bringing that great matter to a head. And it is only one of twenty-five subjects brought beneath the argus ken of this mighty intellect. No wonder that his sight is failing and his face growing haggard under the thankless labours of this session. Take care what you are about, Mr. Thibaudeau, or future ages will associate your name with Gowan's, as Gifford's is coupled with Keat's, as the savage traducer and cruel extinguisher of a man you cannot appreciate, and of talents you are unable to understand.

#### III. THE GREAT A. P.

We return our sincere thanks to Mr. A. P. Macdonald for the only brisk debate we have had this session. Our distant readers will perhaps have some idea of the exciting character of the discussion, when we inform them that Mr. Alleyne, the great phlegmatic, was actually galvanized into life; dropping Harper's Magazine he got upon his legs, and pitched into everybody with all the force of feebleness. Mr. J. A. Macdonald was really in his best trim, and both he and Mr. Brown almost forgot to stammer. Mr. McGee's speech was the first good one we have heard from him this session. Even Mr. Cartier's howls were rather more musical than usual, and Rose was excited into being more prosy and dull than ever. Mr. A. P. Macdonald's virgin blush in oratory only wanted coherence of ideas clearness of expression, and elegance of language to make it the best *debut* we ever heard. We have no doubt that if his conduct as a contractor has been as pure as his language as a speaker, he is far beyond suspicion. It was really abominable to use the honourable contractor so badly; and we have no doubt that he will occupy at least half a page in the next edition of that redoubtable work, "The Book of Martyrs."

#### TO THE TRADE.

Booksellers and news venders who have on hand any of the following numbers of THE GRUMBLER, Vol. 1, would greatly oblige us by returning them, and they will be placed to their credit. The numbers required, are 1, 2, 3, 16, 19, 21, 25, 33, 35, 36, 40, 42, 44, 45, and 46. Should we receive any considerable number of these papers, we will issue next week volumes of THE GRUMBLER bound in papers, to be valued at \$1 each.

#### MR. R. M. ALLEN REDIVIVUS.

We announced to our readers some time since that Mr. R. M. Allen had thought better of his foolish intention of prosecuting our publishers. It appears, however, that that announcement was premature, and that though, mentally, he was convalescent, he has since got over it. He has filed a declaration in our case, and intends devoting a portion of the auspicious month of April to a public exhibition of his folly. We can hardly avoid expressing our satisfaction and delight that this matter will be decided in open court. Nothing could happen which will so completely subserve our interests and extend our circulation as this ridiculous prosecution. We have no desire to make this man's position any more disagreeable than it is already, or to pourtray in advance the sorry figure he will cut next month; he has appealed to Cesar, and to Cesar he shall go. We leave the legal defence of our position to Mr. Eccles. We have every confidence in his acknowledged power and ability, and to him and the jury we commit our case. Meanwhile the public shall be informed of the progress of this overwhelming case. Mr. Allan modestly claims \$2,000 damages.

#### GREAT ATTRACTIONS.

In next week's *Frank Leslie* the following additional illustrations of the Sickles case will be added to the attractions already presented:—

An engraving of the fang of remorse which our correspondent "Ned Eaves dropper, Esq.," informs us is fastened on Sickles' conscience.

A view of two drops of Key's blood magnified.

A splendid view of Mrs. Sickles' tooth-brush, also of two hair pins.

A life sketch of the negro woman's twenty second cousin, Washington Whitewash.

A picture of Mr. Sickles' favourite tom cat, Billy, as he appeared just before the murder on the tiles of the house.

A picture of Mr. Key's office with a side view of the store, and an accurate likeness of his coal scuttle and patent penknife, &c., &c.

#### Changing his Coat.

—The debate on the tariff has placed several members in a novel position. Among other singular features we observe that during the discussion the Hon. George Brown discarded the time-honored "dress coat" and appeared in the House clad in a fashionable cut-away "frock." We understand that Attorney General Macdonald intends to make this remarkable change the basis of his next attack upon the Hon. member for Toronto. He contends that Mr. Brown's readiness to desert a *measure* which he has personally introduced to the notice of Parliament every Session since he entered public life is but another evidence of his thorough baseness and unreliability.