

# BRANIGAN'S CHRONICLES AND CURIOSITIES.

Nothing extenuate, nor set down ought in malice.—Shak.

Vol. I.—No. 23.

HAMILTON, C.W., SATURDAY, APRIL 9, 1859.

PRICE, TWO-PENCE.

Wellington Square, April 2, 1859.

To the Editor of the Chronicles.

DEAR SIR,—Let the Legislators of Canada beware. Let them weigh well the consequences of passing a measure, the very announcement of which causes the most bitter dissension through the country, and even breaches of the public peace. I will be a little more explicit, and state, that the bare proposal of the Postmaster General to pension servants of the Government in their old days, has produced a scene in our usually peaceful village to which for months past it has been a stranger.

In my narration of the occurrence I shall adopt the dramatic style, merely pre-mising, that of the parties concerned, (Messrs. Teapot and Skeesicks) the former is a fine old-school gentleman, and a government official, and the latter a scion of our own Canada, who though naturally pretty sharp, and by no means one of the class upon which Solomon's proverbs come down so heavily, is far better posted upon steam saw "Mills" than on the public affairs of the country. In short he is a "plum," but whether of the Blue, Egg or Gage variety, I leave to some one better skilled in Horticulture to determine.

SCENE—Brick Store at the Corner; time—2 p. m.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.—Messrs. Teapot and Skeesicks sitting by the stove, talking of things in general—Boss away; one clerk at the door, picking his teeth after dinner; the other treading on the tail of Teapot's dog, and accompanying the consequent grunts and short howls, by whistling "Vilikins and Dinah.

Teapot—By the way Mr. Skeesicks have you read the announcement of the proposed pension measure.

Skeesicks—Yes, its a most scandalous piece of wastefulness and corruption.

Teapot—And what in the devil is there so corrupt and wasteful about it? Don't the faithful servants of the government deserve a pension for age, after wearing themselves out for the public good?

Skeesicks—Any man who has brains enough to be a faithful government servant, knows sufficient to lay up a competency; and the Lord knows they get chances enough to do so. [Just then enters Mr. Caughter for a dollar's worth of sugar.] Skeesicks continues: Do you

know, Caughter, that out of that dollar's worth you pay the price of one pound to keep up old fogies, like Teap. here? you young ass you?

Skeesicks—Yes, and an old fool into the bargain.

Up jumps Teapot, cracks Skeesicks over the head with his cane; Skeesicks grabs the cane, and the tussle commences. Prints, hats, boots, bonnets, raisin boxes and brass kettles fly about in awful confusion. A cloud of dust hides the belligerents from view; and as it clears away for a moment, reveals the fact that one of Teapot's optics is seriously damaged,—while Skeesicks ear looks as if Teapot had wished by abbreviating it to deprive him of one claim to his ascetic character. Both parties take breath for a new struggle, when the junior clerk, whose musical efforts have been so rudely interrupted, announces that the boss is coming.—Knowing the objections that gentleman would probably have against his store being converted into a prize ring, Messrs. Teapot and Skeesicks leave in a hurry, looking unutterable things, and leaving the impression on the minds of spectators

"That this dread feud, as prophets say, Will cost more blood another day."

When it comes off you shall be apprized by

Very respectfully yours,

FOXY.

For the Chronicles and Curiosities

DEAR BRANIGAN,

I promised you the result of an Argus glance at our late Tavern License By-law; and I mean to go over some of its clauses without much ceremony, which course, I believe, printers like best:

First, the Corporation of the City of Hamilton enact as follows:

I. "All By Laws relating to the regulation of inns, taverns, ale houses, &c., are repealed."

II. "That from and after the passing of this act it shall not be lawful for any person or persons to keep for sale by retail, on any premises whatever, any wine or spiritous liquor &c., or to open and keep any saloon &c., where any wines or spirits are sold by retail; or to open or keep any saloon, eating house; ordinary or grocery, where fermented or manufactured liquors, not being wines or spiritous liquors, are sold to be drunk therein, or to be sold by

retail in quantities of not less than one quart, not to be drunk therein, or to open and keep any temperance house or hotel, or house of public entertainment, where wine or spiritous or fermented liquors are not sold." Now sir, if this is not absolute restriction, (and it is too bad to restrict temperance houses) I do not understand what is. But the temperance men may open houses or they may keep houses, but they must not do both, for if they do both then the law reaches them. The liquor men have but one little hole left them to creep out of—they may sell, but they must take precious good care not to keep for sale, or this restrictive gentleman will nail them. Then sec. II goes on "And if shall not be lawful for any person to keep, or have in his her or their possession, or on his, her or their premises, any billiard table or bowling alley, set up for hire or gain, directly or indirectly, nor to have any such billiard table or bowling alley in any house or place of public resort, whether the same be used for hire or gain or not, unless he, she or they shall have first obtained a license from the Inspector of Licenses for the city." Mark the ye men from John O'Groats to the Lands End—and ye men from Ottawa to Port Huron! It is good for children that the word person only applies to one, for if it were otherwise they would be entirely restrained from holding or keeping up their places of amusement, unless they took out and paid for a license so to do from our corporation, and children do not generally go single handed to any amusement; so that we may fairly set it down from the By Law that any number of persons, but not one person, may lawfully do or keep any of the aforesaid without a license. Perhaps it was the printer, or some one else, who on purpose or by mistake caused the error to be there. But no matter how the blunder came, it is there—and how or when is it to be rectified? The first portion of this clause of the By Law, in reference to liquors, saloons, &c. up to the second—"And it shall not be lawful &c.," according to all rules of construction is an absolute restriction, inasmuch as the last words "unless he, she or they shall have first obtained a license, cannot by any rules of syntax or grammar be made or supposed to apply to it, nor to any portion of the clause but from the last "and it shall not be lawful, &c., downwards; and if they do not apply to the whole clause from the beginning then the first part of the clause up to the words to which they do apply, stands an absolute restriction. To be more plain, I will put a case in point. It is the same as if it were said—It shall not be