

SIR ROBERT PEEL.

A brief epitome of Sir Robert Peel's career will show that he is something more than an ordinary man; and the fact of a species of superiority is indicated indirectly even more potently than directly, more by inference than by fact. Acknowledged to have been the parent of measures disastrous to Toryism, adverse to the principles of his party, and still chargeable with untold evils of events yet to come, nevertheless he commands the public homage of the men he has offended; and undisputed at their head, marked in the joy of their triumph, as proximate Premier; and in rank of real honor, takes precedence of all the aristocracy.—In the last fact there is something consolatory. The son of a speculator in cotton-spinning, is recognized, personally, as a power to be worshipped by even the hereditary peerage of the realm; and perhaps, the best proof of Sir Robert's superiority is implied in the humble avowal of inferiority made by Lord Stanley.—His Lordship has the reputation of being a haughty man; not long since he was considered a clever man, and was even suspected, when he deserted his friends, of setting himself up for the premiership. The blood of men great during seven centuries obeys the pulsation of his heart; the name he bears is grateful in association with the records of English history, and fortune marked him for her own:—yet, such is Sir Robert Peel's ascendancy that his Lordship is content to be his humble follower. The eagle in the house of Derby, for the first time, veils its eyes, and dare not gaze upon the ancient glory that enshrines the name of Stanley.

The first prominent public measure of Sir Robert Peel, that served to bring him before the public notice, was while practicing diplomacy at Dublin Castle, to establish, by a new institution of police, something to counteract the dangerous Orange Associations. He was met with a furious opposition in all directions.—The Catholics denounced him as adding even more to their instruments of oppression, while the Orangemen regarded with a jealousy but too well justified by the event, a new order that was destined at length to work their overthrow. He established the "Peelers" as a counterpoise to the "Carders," the "Shannavats," and the Orangemen; and the Peelers, who were, on their introduction, regarded as a bulwark to Orange ascendancy, have proved, as he intended, the downfall of a vile party.

His measure was more comprehensive, and rendered his name as familiar in England as his police had done in Ireland; we allude to his famous bill in 1819 to regulate the rates of rent and the value of equivalents for coins. By his success the landlords were compelled to lower their exorbitant rents to a fair standard.

Peel's name was associated with national ruin, and among his most inveterate revilers were the Tory aristocracy and Tory partisans. The Whigs and Liberals came then, as afterwards, to his rescue, and enabled him to persevere in a measure about the utility of which there is now no question.

As if still ambitious of opposition, he next attacked the strong hold of a formidable body of men, the lawyers, who sat incubi-like, upon the energies of society; and as he has since boasted, without commissions of inquiry, carried important legal reforms against the interested prejudices of a profession which form a kind of outfarm for unprovided scions of aristocracy: Associated with law was social order, and his next assault was on prejudice and follies of a more vulgar kind.

In spite of the formidable clamour of nearly all classes, he instituted the most thorough and radical reform in the London

police. At that time the police was constituted of a class of officers, under whose corrupt management the utmost iniquity was afforded to opulent crime. But under this reforming hand, the whole was changed as by magic, and in its place was established the best system of Metropolitan police on the face of the globe. He braved popular clamour, and established a body of men who, like the Irish "Peelers," have not only outlived dislike, but proved the best protectors and friends of those who, at first, regarded them with detestation.

His next achievement was of a mightier kind, and one more marked and enduring in its consequences. In 1829 he surprised his party and the world, by emancipating the Catholics, he enlarged the sense of justice in mankind, and gave a blow to intolerance, from the effects of which no bigotry, however ardent and brutal, can ever enable it to recover. Under that act, and from its enactment, dates the progress of brighter and better opinions.

The emancipation of the Catholics was a daring measure. It shocked the pride, the prejudice, the selfishness of Sir Robert's party. Sir Robert Peel was at once denounced by his former friends. Oxford disowned him as a traitor to her Holy cause. And on a public visit to the cotton mills of Lancashire, he was openly hooted by the Tories. But he nobly and courageously braved the storm of popular fury. Strong in his own rectitude, he refused to bend to the storm, and it soon subsided, and left him more than ever the object of regard to the very men who most denounced him. If it be evidence of true statesmanship to appreciate the wisdom that is abroad, rather than confide in the counsel of the few, even of the reputed wise, then, indeed, is Robert Peel a true statesman. For if he was slow to receive the impressions that filled the public mind, he was, when he recognized them, resolute in giving them form and pressure; and it is a circumstance of present hope, that he has dared to despise the threats and the contumely of his own party, and seek when right, the friendship and support of his opponents.

The position of Sir Robert Peel of late has been in a manner, that of a check upon each party. Nominally a conservative, nay, even their recognized leader and champion, he has exercised a useful and a powerful control upon their bigotry and hereditary aversion to reform, and has himself proposed, and in some instances carried through, the most beneficial and excellent reformations. That he has not always been successful in his proposed changes, is owing more to the opposition of professed liberals than to anything else. In a word, he has controuled alike conservative intolerance of change, and checked the destructive tendency of Radicalism. He has done more for the promotion of real reform, both in England and Ireland, than any man now living, except perhaps Lord Brougham,—and were he in name, as he has ever been in fact, a Reformer, his elevation would not meet the dread with which it is now received on the part of the friends of human rights.—*Boston Atlas.*

The CALEDONIA, which left Boston on the 2nd, arrived at Halifax on the evening of the 7th, after a most tempestuous passage. On the 4th, her third mate, carpenter, and eight or nine of the men, were very severely injured, the mate and carpenter each having a leg broken. The gale was tremendous, so much so, that for a time the passengers gave up nearly all hope of ever reaching port. The Caledonia had her paddle boxes somewhat injured, and lost her life-boat. She lay to 52 hours. Her arrival at Halifax was looked for with great anxiety.—*Albany Advertiser.*

Original.

THE ABSURDITY OF MATERIALISM

One of the strange, but fashionable, whims of our free-thinking theorists, is to scoff at the belief in the existence of souls after death, and indeed of all purely spiritual beings, as if it were more inconceivable how souls should exist in a separate state from their bodies, than in that, in which we now see them conjoined with them. For who can deny that there is in all living creatures a governing principle distinct from their earthly parts; from which fast it is separated by death; and which might as well exist after such separation as before it, were there only just cause for its continuing so to exist.—Reason tells, that in the wise economy of Providence, when any thing has fully answered the end for which it was made, it must cease to be. That therefore the creatures which have received the principle of life but for the subserviency or trial of man in his present transient condition; for the peopling and furnishing forth of his place of exile here below; must, when all their required duty is ended, quit the scene, and cease to be. Not so the rational soul, to whom God has imparted the knowledge of Himself; which is to her the surest pledge of immortality afforded her. For, to what end was that knowledge imparted to her, if not to shew that she was made to admire, love, praise and adore him; a duty which she can never sufficiently perform; an end, which, as he is infinite in all perfection, can never be accomplished by the finite creature. Most evidently then was the rational soul destined to exist for ever.

Will these silly reasoners then maintain, that a soul, united with the body, when once separated from it, no longer exists. Yet the greater wonder is, what none can deny, that such a living, active, thinking, reasoning, feeling, invisible and pure spirit could be so closely connected with its material organ, a mere clod of clay. Is it not easier to suppose it capable of existing in its free and simple, than in a compound state? Or can God, who makes and unites two distinct substances together, not disjoin, and leave them, if he pleases, each in its own separate condition?

But we are flippantly told that the soul herself is nothing but attenuated matter; "tenuis aura," or a thin vapour; a "scintilla quædam ignis ætherei;" a certain spark of æthereal fire; any thing, but an immortal being, exposed for its crimes to everlasting punishment. This our modern sophists can never endure the idea of; and having nothing original of their own to build their infidel theories on; they grasp at the blind surmises of the be-ighted pagans; and think, like the Osrich, by hiding their heads, to escape the onset of the pursuers. But, if the soul be matter, it must have the qualities of matter; such as size, shape, colour, weight, taste and smell. It must be soft or hard; rough or smooth, dry or liquid, hot or cold, in motion, or at rest, &c. And could any one, but a bedfomite, glory in having such a soul as this? The very essence of the soul is cogitation; which matter is essentially

incapable of. And who can ascribe to cogitation, or thought, any of these properties of matter? Yet our mock philosophy has carried its extravagance to such a point of absurdity; and, to the disgrace of the age, has so far succeeded in making this, and its other impious, immoral, and idiotical speculations, pass for the fashionable opinions of the times.

To such a pass of infidelity has the free-thinking spirit of the Protestant Reformation, and the disgusting confusion of its numberless jarring sects, led on the overweening, self-taught and misdirected multitude. It would seem as if amid all this free-thinking Mania, the Saviour's words were coming to pass, "do you think, (says he,) when the Son of man cometh, that he shall find faith upon the earth?"—*Luke, xviii, 8.*

ACQUITTAL OF MCLEOD.

The last act of the great national drama has been at length concluded, and a jury of the most "free and enlightened" people in the world have pronounced that the Canadian military man was not guilty of murder in obeying the commands of his Sovereign, by his being able, fortunately for himself, to prove that he was elsewhere at the time of the committal of the act which has called down the indignation of the Sovereign People.—For the prisoner's sake, we rejoice at this result; for the sake of humanity, we ought perhaps to be equally thankful; but we abstain till a fitter opportunity, giving vent to those reflections, which this extraordinary occurrence has forced upon us.

The Jury, it seems, only required a few minutes' deliberation, to frame its verdict of "NOT GUILTY." The prisoner, we believe, has been got off in safety toward New York, from whence, it is said, he purports sailing for England.—*Patriot.*

We are rejoiced to learn that our gallant townsman, Sir Allan N. Macnab, was appointed on Friday evening last, at a numerous meeting at Toronto, one of the deputies to proceed forthwith to England on a special mission. He will carry with him the warmest wishes of his friends in this place, whom he has always served by his zeal and assiduity, and who can never forget the inappreciable value of the service he has rendered his Sovereign, the Empire, and this Province, by his uniform loyalty, fidelity and devotion. H. Sherwood, Esq. Q. O. accompanies him. *Gazette.*

We are sorry to learn the protracted illness of our worthy Bishop, whose absence from his Diocese is so universally regretted. An undefined rumour is circulating amongst us, that a new Bishop has been appointed for Western Canada; but by whom he has been selected, is yet a mystery to all the most concerned in the choice.

Letters and Remittances received during the week.

LONDON—Dennis O'Brien, & Barrack Master Serjeant Harding O'Brien, each 7s 6d
BRANTFORD—John McDonell, Esq.; Barrister, 7s 6d
HAMILTON—Patrick Harvey, 7s 6d
INDAS—John Burns, 7s 6d
WEST FLAMBORO—Lewis Aslin, 7s 6d
WATERDOWN—James Cassidy, James Cussen, each 5s. Patrick Feeny, 7s 6d
OAKVILLE—Thomas Sweeney, 7s 6d
TORONTO GORE—John Roe, S P Grant, 7s 6d
TORONTO TOWNSHIP—Wm Skelly, 7s 6d
MARKHAM—Terrance McKenna, 15s
BARRIE—Miles Kenny, 15s
PERTH—Rev Mr. McDonagh, James Freeman, John McDonell, Bernard Byrnes, Donald McLellan, Ed. Hudson, each 7s 6d