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THE GRUMBLER.

VOL. I.

TORONTO, SATURDAY, MARCH 20, 1853.

NO. 1.

THE GRUMBLER.

"If there's a hole in n' your coat,
I tede you tede it;
A chief's naming you taking notes,
And, faith, he'll tede it."

SATURDAY, MARCH 20, 1853.

INTRODUCTION.

DEAR READER.—Our birth, you will say, is obscure, our parentage unknown, and our size small! Well, be it so. It may be true that we have been born, like many other gigantic undertakings, nobody-knows-where; that we are a little foundling, as helpless as Moses drifting in his cradle down the Nile; and that, being an infant; we are rather dwarfish. But, nevertheless, there is much excellent speech in us, by which we hope to make a name and a habitation for ourselves; and notwithstanding our age and youth, we doubt not that, after the manner of Hercules, we could—if the occasion would only offer—strangle obtrusive serpents in the absence of our gossiping nurse.

However, without giving more than a general reason as to the why and the wherefore we have presumed to be born at all, let us briefly state, what we intend to accomplish, now that we feel the thrill of life within us. And, first of all, hear us aver that, in the every-day meaning of those terms, we are neither Whig nor Tory, Conservative nor Radical, Clear Grit nor Doughface, Protestant, nor Catholic, Infidel nor Musselman, Jew, Jumper, Buddhist nor Brahmin. In fact, we flatter ourselves, we are a respectable hybrid; and if nature has but endowed us with a just conception of right and wrong and the sublime and the ridiculous, it shall be our delight to trace the characters of good men and their deeds with the milk of human kindness, and to draw the characters of bad men and their works, with a pon of iron, dipped in gall.

If any newspaper shall light the brand of religious discord we will, as we hope for happiness, place such a print in a more uncomfortable situation than was his, who first stole the fire from its ethereal home. If another journal, with leathern conscience, continues to make no more of a lie than a hungry man would of a beefsteak, we will let the people know—after making due enquiry—that the brimstones of Pandemonium would cry out against its most modest inuendoes. If a third paper will uphold iniquity by means of fine writing, and wash down diabolical schemes by parabolical statements, we shall wring the mask from the traitor's face and cuff him to the pillory. Nor will we stop here. Everything public shall be our care. Public men, public societies, institutions, corporations and parliaments,

public benefactors and defaulters, will all pass under our observation. Let it appear that the Governor General knows how many bottles of wine are in his cellar, or that a general green grocer was present at a levee, and we will admonish the one for an infraction of dignity, and chastise the other for his absurd ambition. Let an honorable member of parliament persist in boring the house by long speeches, or by the perpetration of words for the silly part of the ladies' gallery, and we will feel it incumbent on us to work a cure for him in one week. Patriots, and those ambitious of legislative honour, may be sure that we have an eye to them, and that if they attempt any thing half so mean as to make speeches at charity gatherings, in order to acquire that popularity which should flow from merit, they will meet with no more gentle treatment, than did the bird with the borrowed feathers. Nor will we overlook the members of our corporation. It will be a pity indeed if their good deeds are not as publicly known as we intend to make their bad grammar, and chiselling.

We intend to visit the theatre also. Not, however, to criticise so much as to encourage. It is a tender young plant, owing very little to its legitimate parent—the public. We will therefore take the young tyro, by the hand, and see what we can do towards increasing its stature, intimating at the same time that we are apt to be choleric at an obstinate disposition. And then, we must devote a little attention to the military and militia. We had rather not see the airs these people give themselves at times, and to remedy the evil we propose to ourselves to keep the young rascals in check.

Shall we say that the fashions will come under our care? But we mean to deal tenderly with red petticoats, and to allow not a little extravagance in the matter of bonnets and boots, and loops and hoops; for we believe that the wearers of these articles are, after all, the best judges of their becomingness. And as to the political position of the sex,—being among those who do not desire a highly intellectual woman for our wife—we will endeavour to sustain the dear creatures as they are, rather than indulge in a wish to see them rendered really unhappy by endeavoring after imaginary excellence.

Thus have we defined our position, and we shall have done, when we put it on record, that to be an impartial judge of all sects and creeds—to be a conservative when our rights are in danger—and a reformer when reformation is needed—to be a radical when upholding right, and a Clear Grit when denouncing wrong—to be the champion of weakness and the friend of virtue—to be all this, and much more that is commendable, is the object of this journal. And if we depart from it to the right hand or to the left to do evil, may we become curled paper to light pipes withal, and to all intents and purposes be eternally consumed. But, if we maintain the

course which we have marked out, with integrity and zeal, then, dear reader, we confidently ask for, and so far forget our position as to demand your support.

Before concluding, allow us to say, that as we are naturally very bashful, we think it unnecessary that our name should be known, for we feel assured that in the event of ourselves being officially acquainted with everybody else, we should be bored to death by having greatness thrust upon us. Therefore we will remain hid in the fullness of our own insignificance; and, although no cynic, retire under the shadow of our tub.

OUR MISSION.

TO OUR TRUSTY AND WELL-BELOVED FRIEND, THE PUBLIC, GREETING:—

To chase dark shadows when the brow is clouded,
To cheer the heart with "hard times" gloom eustrouled,
To mingle smiles of cheerful merriment,
To wield a scourge, though void of harsh intent,
To stormy frown on snobbish insolence,
To aid the cause of orphaned innocence,
To mingle wit in a proportion due,
With wisdom sage and moralizing true,
To laugh at follies innocently strange,
To frown on follies brought within our range,
To probe conceit, and dull pretence unmask,
To praise, where due, shall be our willing task:
And last, not least, to prove an ever-ready wiser
In aint to make our friend, the "Public," wiser.

Of our Toronto Post Office

— We have not much to complain. One feature in its economy, however, has often occurred to us as singular—it is, the encouragement given to small-retailers and mendicants about the entrances, passages, and waiting-room of that establishment. The thoroughfares, at times, are completely blocked. As business men, we feel it to be a nuisance that ought to be abated; but our tender sympathies for the ladies, compel us to demand a becoming recognition of their crinoline by public servants. With this object, we beg to submit the following brace of queries: Are the apple-women to be recognized as part of the official staff of the Department? If not, are they established by the Post Master himself, on the basis of commission, or half-profits? Suspension.

— We regret to learn that several washer-women have failed in consequence of the Red Petticoat movement. Irreproachable white is no longer in vogue.

Novel Exhibition.

— The disgorging of the Ten Thousand Pounds by Mr. Bowes. Will the Governor of the Windward Islands help him? Having got the simple Christian into a scrape, he ought to help him out of it. Let it at least be said—

"Regrets as they were, themselves they would not rob—
'Twas in the heart some virtuous always loaves—
And, though they'd thanked the public for a job,
They, amongst themselves, were honorable thieves!"