

For the Pearl.

SHONGASSON.

MR. EDITOR—A Correspondent of the Times, signing himself Albyn, having published his rejected prize poem, and prefixed thereunto a note, which appears to breathe a defiance,—I have taken up my quill to prove to him, and the “better judges;” that his poem at least is “full of defects:—of the others I am not at liberty to write, till they like this shall have made their public appearance.—

I am with respect,
ONE OF THE (*inferior*) JUDGES.

In the prosecution of the task it shall be my sole object, (not being a critic by trade) to measure the thing by itself; for it would be absurd to apply the rule and plummet, where their use would appear to have been totally disregarded by the constructor;—and besides, were I to proceed thus, I should find it “out of all proportion my Lord:” the errors would be almost as frequent as the words. Let it suffice then to shew, that the thing is at variance with itself, for by no law can that be judged which is made in contempt of all,—I shall now then as clearly as I am able, point out those absurdities, which in my opinion condemned the *Extract*.

In the first place, it purported to be the *speech* of an Indian Warrior,—an untutored Savage,—but upon examination, I found that either he or Albyn, misstated the fact; either it is not the *speech* of Shongasson,—or he was other than he seemed; and now for the proofs: In 22d line this Savage is made to use a metaphor, derived from a source whence he had never an opportunity to draw it;—he, ignorant of the effect of tillage upon land, is made to compare life to it.—The wily Indian would tell his tribe nothing which neither he nor they understood. In 42d line a similar incongruity occurs,—“Fighting furies worthy of our steel;” here, again he, talks nonsense,—“worthy of our steel!” Where did Shongasson get his trusty blade? Eh Mr. Albyn!—or where got he the expression?—peradventure he used words without a meaning like—like whom?—But these are slight slips,—little mistakes, compared with the absurdity to be seen in the 48th line.

“Be then your rivals, not those rude Centaurs.” O ho, Mr. Shongasson—You are there are you?—a Grecian emigrant by jingo—or an old Rum’ua (Roman) at least—A Centaur, eh, I say trap to you—Alas for the better judges,—well what do they say now—I suppose they call that “Good?”—He talks of Gallic signs too,—in short he talks very unlike a sober, “tall, thin,” “feeble,” “vast,” “great.” Indian; but enough of this, no Indian, (if so be he was an Indian) in his right mind, would undertake to harangue his fellow Chiefs in such fashion, therefore as an Indian’s speech it is a decided failure. Q. E. D. And here I might cast down my pen, and expect the reply of the “better JUDGES,” clever fellows they be, I’ll warrant, if they find you “not guilty” of a mistake. But you may say, is that all you have to say against my extract?—O no, Mr. Albyn, there are many more errors of which you may be convicted—not to say a word of the faults in composition, etc.—for instance the wretched similitude,—similitude do I say?—’tis none, the things compared are as utterly unlike as the opinions of Albyn and the prize committee:—what similarity is there betwixt the “tall,” “thin,” “feeble,” “vast,” “great Shongasson” —(or are these epithets intended for the “hush’d Minas?”) and the dull rolling cloud curling up a cape,—which casts its “doubtful mein” (*mein?*) o’er Horton vale? the “doubtful mein” of a vapour!—tell it not in “Cape Breton” nor blab it to the “House of Assembly!”

What does “equal years” mean?—5th line “Yet here indulgent in the council still:” who is indulgent? the old man or the council.—17th line, “Embalms their memories with praise:” this is a *bad* metaphor and a *worse* mode of preservation. 30th line: “When the fierce Mohawks from our warriors fled, “And Abenakis at our *poor* warriors bled,” 38th line—*bow-wow-wow*—how extremely inelegant and unpoetical;—“Or when we quaff’d the running brooks of blood,” where is Albyn’s authority for imputing this cannibal propensity,—’tis very disgusting, and doubly so because untrue:—the noble Micmacs had no such appetite.

“My voice is peace,” please supply for,—but Mr. Editor although the half has not been told I am fearful that too much has been written to try the patience of your readers to warrant my proceeding any farther,—however, should Albyn or the better judges deem my task unfinished, I may at another opportunity, trouble them with a few more blunders.—And I here leave them, not because the errors have all been shewn, but because I would rather employ my leisure in searching for elegancies elsewhere, fully persuaded that all who read must allow that Albyn’s bantling is pretty only in its parent’s eyes, and that the prize Committee acted justly in its condemnation.

[Perhaps it would be scarcely fair to let the above appear without some qualification as regards the writer whose signature is attached to the poem in question. Some persons might be led to infer that the critic’s depreciation might be generally applied to the author’s literary productions; but—although the piece under review, may have blemishes, which, under circumstances,

call for remark—those acquainted with Nova Scotia literature know, that “Albyn” has, frequently, during a series of years, written and published articles, that, for sweetness of metre, delicacy and strength of thought, and appropriateness of diction, are worthy of much praise.]—*Pearl*.

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QUACKERY A SCIENCE.

FREE TRANSLATION FROM THE ITALIAN OF GIUSEPPE DROGHILIO.

No. 2.

The field of Quackery is exactly where it was hundreds of centuries ago, it lies in the fertile regions of ignorance, prejudice, conceit, caprice, and hope deferred. It may seem somewhat paradoxical but it is nevertheless a truth that disease is not the “*scena bella*,” as Droghilio calls it, of Quackery. It is on the rude undisciplined senses, glimmerings of reason, and unaided animal and moral powers on which it displays its main influence—in its dealings with these it never fails—but disease often baffles its utmost exertions. Disease is always a secondary consideration with the thoroughly bred and scientifically working Quack; he glories in addressing himself personally and *newspaperly* to the wants and cravings of the fancy and imagination—whilst he exercises his persuasive eloquence with these, he holds them in absolute bondage by the mysteries of his art—he gathers herbs like a Druid by moonlight, he gives a glimpse of his mysterious pill, powder, or plaster—he speaks of death as a result entirely unknown to him, he places all the labours of the undertaker with admirable tact and skill on the interference and ignorance of the Regular Physician—and he concludes by leaving but one person in the whole world before the eyes of his patient, “*per sua natura*”—*himself*.

As in every grade of society there are numberless persons who view Quackery with esteem and confidence—and thousands who want to, and will, be *quacked*—it is a natural consequence that characters will arise out of these conditions of life:—and as circumstances have been long notorious for making men—so have they in every age been the prolific parents of quacks—nor can any one be justified in the present day, when the demands of our common nature are every where filled up by the ingenuity of scientific men, in outraging the persecuted names of charlatanism when the necessities of the community actually require them, and when acute and shrewd persons are to be found and are instigated to practice by such heavy arguments as those of the purest gold and silver.—Few birds are of greater consequence than the vulture, and why? Is it not because there is a great demand for his services? The demand for stews has maintained them for ages in the very face of christianity.

The clamorous boasting of quacks is often thoughtlessly ridiculed—but those who censure this so rashly forget that the pretensions of an *alcohest* or *lapis philosophorum* is one of the most accomplished qualifications of the science of Quackery—a Quack would indeed know little of his art if he was to commit a felony upon his own remedy—he but half understands the elasticity of human proselytism who would confine his panacea to one faculty when he can always extend it over all. As men will gluttonize on meat and drink so will they have excess of *humbug*—they will have it—they are not to be cheated—they will be *humbugged*. Are they not fools who refuse to gratify this craving of society, they ridicule it, they would turn it to contempt. They might as well argue against the wind or the confirmed drunkard—all such persons want practical knowledge—they hastily judge others by themselves—and like metaphysicians of old make rules that will answer but for one! The education of all the professions tends to lead them away from the real character of mankind—it unfit them for employment where it is most lucrative—it places them in positions where their abilities are withheld from the community—it places them as it were in reserve—they take up a position behind the parties engaged—and what is very often the case with the best disciplined troops their services may never be required. Thus it is with the Quack and the regularly bred Doctor. The quack with admirable address says to his less accomplished practitioner, “Stand you there while I whisper a word of consolation in the ear of your patient—he will pay me a pound when he wont pay you a farthing—be quiet—or swear away if you will—but you don’t understand it.”

When Paracelsus began his career he set out with right good sense by publicly burning the writings of Galen and Avicenna:—he did more,—he went further,—and with greater good sense still, he invested himself with the miraculous powers of mystery,—and as the writings were burning, he declared that he had just been down at the gates of Hell where he had refuted them both, to the Devil’s entire satisfaction!

Paracelsus knew mankind better than most men of his day, though all the Doctors of those days knew them pretty well—he invented an elixir which was to prolong men’s lives to that of Methusaleh’s—it was called his Elixir Proprietatis. And though it was only a mixture of saffron, myrrh and aloes, yet it answered all the purposes for which it was designed—it occupied men’s thoughts for the time—many had swallowed it and continued to

thrive and promise long continued life, and as Paracelsus was a drunken fellow, provided he did not drink his own elixir, which I believe he carefully avoided, the probability was that his medicine would do him good service to the last and for as long as he was concerned maintain its fame. Van Helmont a follower of Paracelsus says boldly—“let every one who cannot cure all diseases with the *alcohest* of Paracelsus be expelled the faculty.”

The translator begs here to quote a verse from another work of Giuseppe Droghilio—being a poetical sketch of the Dogmas, Theories and Doctrine of Physic—in reference to Paracelsus it runs thus:

“The stone of the philosophers he found
When wandering on the frontiers of great Cham,
Some say an Arab did the thing propound—
Some say it was the offspring of a dram
Which he had taken when a prisoner bound:
Some think it all a piece of fudge or flam,
And far behind his mercury or opium,
The greatest medicines in his Pharmacopium.”

“Of his Elixir Proprietatis
He boasted (it was saffron myrrh and aloes,)
With which none ever could be dissatis-
fied,—it was life to all but drunken fellows!
Now think of a discovery such as that is,
Which life prolongs beyond Methusaleh’s!
It would have ended all our books and shelves,
By handing down our ancestors themselves!”

MORNING AT COLLEGE, AFTER A NIGHT’S DEBAUCH.
—Quickly and quaintly did Sleep body forth its ever-varying figures to his view, like the forms displayed on the shifting sides of an Italian image boy’s tray; till Fancy finished by conjuring up a ferocious looking custom-house officer out of the diminutive figure of his Scout, who had utterly forgotten his new master’s existence till the bell ceased, and only roused him just in time to present himself in his shirt at the sitting-room window, and catch a glimpse of the last scholar, as he spread the wings of his white surplice, and flew furiously towards the already closing doors of the chapel.

The Freshman returned to his bedroom, said it was pleasant, and looked as if it was anything but pleasant,—sighed, sate down, and rested his head on his hand for a few minutes. He then rose, looked in the glass, saw a very pale face, and a pair of eyes, which looked like glazed miniatures of themselves,—rushed suddenly to the water-jug, poured its contents into the basin, inserted his head in it, and drank himself nearly high and dry before he withdrew it again,—sate down once more, sighed once more,—commenced dressing very slowly,—made a most unsatisfactory bow to his neckcloth,—looked at his hand,—it was shaking,—so he shook his head to keep it company, and then tapped it gently with his fore-finger, as if he was knocking up Memory to consult her on the occurrences of the preceding evening. The attempt was a failure. There was no concealing the fact any longer,—either the mulled claret had been too aristocratic, or the gin-punch too plebeian for him.

He sank upon the sofa, and gazed upon the quiet quadrangle and green garden beyond it. Above, around, beneath, all was sunny, and soft, and tranquil. The stillness of Sabbath blended sweetly with the brightness of summer, and the Freshman’s dim gaze roved vacantly over the broad beauty of earth and heaven, and his ear drank in half unconsciously the faint song of the distant spring-bird, till something seemed to tell him that his own feverish head and languid pulse were not exactly in keeping with the general harmony of the picture. Besides the light hurt his eyes. He drew down the blind, and retired from the window to try and remember what great scholar it was of whom it was recorded, that having taken somewhat more than was good for him at some annual college festival, he was discovered in the morning with his night-cap placed on the candle by way of extinguisher.

LORD BROUGHAM’S OPINION OF JUNIUS.—We find the following opinion of Junius expressed by Lord Brougham, in his late work, “Historical Sketches of the Statesmen of the Times of George III:”—

“He appears to have been a person in whose bosom every fierce and malignant passion raged without the control of a sound judgment, and without any kindly feeling to attemper his nature. Writing at a time when good or even correct composition was little studied, and in the newspapers hardly ever met with, his polished style, though very far from being a correct one, and further still from being good pure English, being made the vehicle of abuse, sarcasm, and pointed invective, naturally excited a degree of attention which was further maintained by the boldness of his proceedings. No man can read a page of any letter without perceiving, that the writer has but one way of handling every subject, and that he constructs his sentences with the sole design of saying the most bitter things he can in the most striking way, without ever regarding in the least degree their being applicable or inapplicable to the object of the attack. The consequence is, that the greater part of his invective will suit just one bad man or wicked minister as well as another.”