

rank. But houses are built in ranks, the space between which is termed a street; therefore, to say that Mr. So-and-so is building a fine house on Hollis street is incorrect. It is not likely however, that expressions so manifestly false as this, will ever find their way to England; but there are other Americanisms which are, we regret to say, gradually, but surely undermining the purity of the English language. The term—"ungentlemanly" is now commonly used by many English writers, although none have as yet ventured to characterise a woman's conduct as "unladyly." The needless introduction of the word "quite" so common in this Province—has also become common in the English newspapers, although, so far as we can learn, it has not yet been legitimized in any modern work of standard excellence. How often do we see in our city papers paragraphs commencing thus:—"Quite a number of persons were present at the opening, &c." The word "quite" has here no obvious meaning, although from its false usage, we know the sense in which it is used. There is another vile phrase—whether American or Nova Scotian we are unable to say—which is extensively used by the lower classes, and tolerated by many higher in the social scale. We allude to the expression, "right away," which has by common consent been invested with the meaning of "immediately," or "at once." This is not a whit less slangy than the expression "in a jiffy"; but the latter is in England acknowledged as slang, whereas the former is virtually becoming bona fide Haligonese, and may in course of time cross the Atlantic as a fresh innovation. As regards the "guessing" and "calculating" peculiar to the new world, we presume such terms are indulged in perfect honesty, and that Americans are, while conversing, really calculating upon the probable results of their present converse and so to speak—"taking stock" of their companions. The term "loafer," if it mean one lounging at corners and bar-rooms in search of sustenance, mental or physical—is, we think, expressive and worthy of adoption. In the slang of the turf again we are minutely and needlessly practical. Why do we term a trial of speed at the fastest rate possible for horses, a "gallop under saddle"? We might understand the wisdom of the expression were we in the habit of galloping our horses in harness more cumbersome than the term "saddle" implies. This however is merely the slang of the racing world, a thing of very small importance indeed. But we consider the gradual deterioration of a language so rich as ours, to be no light thing, and we protest against the Americanisms in common use as having a directly baleful tendency. In many respects we speak more correctly than the middle class English. We have never heard a Nova Scotian leave out an *h*, nor are we tainted with any special provincialisms—(but the language which we pronounce so correctly is not, in some cases, English at all, nor does it bear the test of being printed as such.

#### DOWNEY IN A FIX.

We present our readers with an exact copy of a letter (addressed to an officer high in command) from one who had formerly served in the British Army. The moral conveyed by this curious specimen of orthography is sad, albeit the letter is ludicrous. Poor Downey has, it would seem, made a mistake in enlisting under the Stars and Stripes, and, if he be still in the land of the living, doubtless regrets his choice of a livelihood. The poor fellow's implicit belief in the influence of an officer under whom he had formerly served, shows that Downey is one of a class of men upon whom discipline has not been thrown away. He is naturally indignant at having been robbed by one in a position which he had in happier times been taught to regard as sacred, his indignation looks for sympathy at the hands of those whom he had served long and faithfully. But Downey forgets that he is no longer a British subject, and his too confident appeals to "the Duke of Cambridge," and General "Dakers" (Dacres) must end in nothing. We are sorry for Downey, but we see no direct means of helping him. He is one out of many who have foolishly enlisted in the Federal service, rather than re-enlist in a service whose Captains are not given to robbing their soldiers under false pretences. Downey, having served his time in the British Army, may possibly have been seduced by brilliant promises to try his hand at soldiering, under what perhaps seemed

to him more advantages as circumstances. But the result has been sadly disappointing. Downey, in his hour of need, appeals to those who are now powerless to save him. He forgets everything save that nationality which he has so unwisely forfeited, and in the bitterness of his heart looks for protection to those who can no longer serve him. The seemingly hopeless termination of Downey's career should be a caution to every soldier serving in British North America. Desertions from this Station are happily of rare occurrence, but desertion has in New Brunswick been attempted far too often. The following letter gives us an insight into the peculiarities of the Federal service, as exemplified in the case of an old soldier who had fought at Alma, Sebastopol, and Lucknow. Poor Downey—having enlisted with a clear conscience—has been shamefully treated, and those who desert our service to serve under Yankee banners are not only treated in a similar manner, but are also insulted and reviled as renegades unworthy of tolerance. Downey's effusion must now be considered. Here it is:—

"Dear Sir,—Guner Daniel Downey has enlisted to serve the 21 New York Cavalry for the term of one year reported at Almira I was sent to Fort Fedeli Hill under a Captain and guard while on the way the Capt. asked me if I had any fire arms which I told him I had and he told me to give them to him which I did with the promise of having them when I got to this place and I hope dear sir that you will intercede with the duke of Cambridge Commander and Chief of the British forces to show how I was robbed by this Captain of a revolver valued at forty dollars and ten dollars in money—so no more at present but remains your obedient servant

DANIEL DOWNEY.

which taught the battle of Alma in Comand Belleclaver Sebastopol or so Luceno and the relief of Luceno I hope that you will copy this letter to major general Dakers Willwich Kent England if no answer I will write privetly another week Direct to Daniel Downey through Lord lions District of Columbia."

#### SEVEN-PENCE-HALFPENNY.

A philosopher, in the old and true acceptation of the term, i.e., one superior to pecuniary considerations can no longer exist, unless he is content to shut up himself and his philosophy in one spot for the term of his natural life. No wandering over the face of the earth could be managed without many and abstruse calculations as to the practical value of various coins, a proceeding we conceive, peculiarly obnoxious to the philosophic mind. The genus thrives as long as they could vagabondize about without money, but the present age is increasing, and railway companies do not transport penniless philosophers free of charge, and indeed if they did, the said travellers would be but little better off, as they would certainly be locked up as vagrants. Money then being necessary for travelling, and more-over entailing abstruse calculations, it is obvious that the philosopher, the real Simon Pure, must wait for better days. Possibly when the universal decimal coinage is introduced, he may again appear upon the scene. As at present the only approach to universality on the part of coinage is, that it is universally diverse, we fear he is sentenced to a long absence.

Nearly every country, be it large or small, has a different coinage. As if it was't enough for an unhappy wight, a stranger in the land, to be painfully conscious of the precarious state of his finances, he is obliged to go through most heart-breaking sums, in order to form a remote guess at his liabilities and assets. This is a process the more pleasing, as, so complicated are their conversions, no one under a senior wrangler ever brings them out right at the first shot, or the same twice running. The result, to the less gifted traveller, is spendthrift recklessness or lunacy,—two very good reasons for a general decimal coinage. Everyone knows the story of the man of an enquiring mind who set out to travel in Germany. In the first state he reached he changed an English sovereign, into a handful of the coin of the country, supposed to represent that sum; in the next state he changed this handful for its equivalent there, and so on. On returning to his starting point he ended found that what ought to have been a *se* shillings and nine-pence, thus painfulness of riches. Whether he co-  
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