

"SOME JOINT AUTHORITY,"

OR A HISTORY OF THE OPPOSITION DURING THE PRESENT SESSION.—IN FOUR ACTS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—The Honorable George Brown and Mr. William Macdougall, M.P.P., in the room of the former in Russell's hotel, at Quebec, on the night of the 23th February last—hour 12 o'clock—a pack of cards lying on the table, and a tumbler of hot-scotch before each of the heroes.

BROWN—(after draining a horn)— Come, Mac, let's off, and rest ourselves to night, And gain fresh strength for the approaching fight; To morrow's eve will see us on that floor, Where we must fight, as oft we've fought before. Nay, more, upon the issue of this strife, Depends inglorious death or happy life; We'll gain our point—we'll scale the heights of fame, 'Twill never do to sink our heads in shame.

MACDOUGALL.—It gives me cheer to hear you talk so bold. Thou'rt still the same Grit Chief thou wert of old. Full on thee shines that bright, auspicious day, You'll rout the truckling crew, led by John A.— You'll sweep them clean from out this mis-ruled land, And march right onward with your Clear-Grit band. [Two more horns disposed of, and the happy pair retire to peaceful slumber.]

SCENE II.—Floor of the House of Assembly—day 20th February, half past two o'clock—members rushing in and out—great shaking of hands and general congratulation—Brown and Macdougall seated together in an out-of-the-way corner.

MACDOUGALL.—(with terror-stricken countenance)— Hast heard the news from mouth to mouth pass round— That traitors in the Clear Grit camp are found?

BROWN—(in astonishment)— What, traitors in the camp! I swear no; so, But let me hear; come, tell me all you know. MAC.—The news is such that I can not confute. It's fearful, dreadful, strikes me almost mute. BROWN—Come, come, this senseless badinage away. You're jesting, Mac, you mean not what you say.

MAC.—Sir, say not so; I mean it, on your honor, They're gone—John Sandfield, Foley, Bell and Connor, Wallbridge and Patrick—more I need not mention— They're dead against us, and the great convention.

BROWN—What say you Mac? Oh! no, it is not true; Some senseless jade has made a fool of you. But come what may—'e'en should they turn coa'— I'll press the resolutions to a vote; To-day, to that effect, I'll notice give, 'Tis death or life—than die 'tis better live, These fellows may, p'raps, attempt to balk us; What say you, Mac?—We'll try their wits in caucus. [Conversation interrupted by the entry of the Speaker: and the mace.]

ACT II.

The House in Session.

[The Speech from the Throne having been read, and the Attorney General being about to move the adjournment of the House, the Clear Grit Chief rises.] Mr. Brown—(Thrusting his left hand into the left pocket of his pantaloons, and looking indignant, though attempting to hide his emotion.)—

Before the house adjourns to-day, I beg to make a motion, In reference to a matter, Sir, That's causing some commotion.

(Mr. Brown clears his throat and proceeds,)— Some few months past, as you're aware, (Pray, gentlemen, attention!) Two hundred of our Western Grits, Assembled in convention,

These sturdy yeomen—sons of toll— Though men of wealth and station— Considered, for four weary days, The matters of the nation.

The upshot of this meeting was— This solemn, sage communion— That, all, with one accord, cried out, "Dissolve, dissolve the union!"

"Divide the Provinces anew"— This was their declaration— "And bind them with another bond— The bond of federation!"

"What of a central power?" said one, "What of its constitution?" No sooner said than was found out, Its true and sure solution.

Lord Durham, Sir, was brought to hear, And his instructions cited— "Some joint authority" (Roars of laughter from the Ministerial benches)—was the thing, To save our land belighted.

I now give notice to the House, That at mid-stant day, Sir, These resolutions will come up, When all can have their say, Sir.

[The House then adjourned.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—John Sandfield Macdonald, Foley, Connor and Wallbridge in deep and serious consultation in a room in Russell's Hotel.

JOHN SANDFIELD—(warning up.)— 'Twill never do; it is, indeed, too bad— The man is crazy, he's short of being mad; I'll not submit; I'd see them all to pot— Brown, Mowat, Notman—yes, the entire lot, Before I'd vote to set things all adrift— A senseless, shameless, inexpedient shift!

CONNOR— You're right, John S., you speak up like a man, I'll vote with you—Come, onward, lead the van!

FOLEY— I must confess I once had hope in Brown, But he has proved himself a clumsy clown; In all things appertaining to the state He's scaled his doom—and we need mind our fate.

WALLBRIDGE— Foley, you speak my mind just to a T. I once was blind, but now, dear Sir, I see.

JOHN SANDFIELD— I'm glad to find you all thus joined with me, We'll knock these resolutions clean to sea; But still, my friends, we must not be too rash 'Twill never do to make a hurried smash— Appear good-natured—do not fear to smile 'Twill serve our end, without displaying guile. Brown's called a caucus, there we'll meet to-day, I'll move that he be leader—you'll say, "yea," 'Tis just the thing—what say you?—will it do? Mind "mum's" the word—'tis only *entre nous*.

ALL.—'Twill do, 'twill do.

SCENE II.—The Opposition in Caucus—all the members apparently in a most happy state of mind.

BROWN—(Rising with a good-natured smile on his countenance.)—

This caucus's called, good friends, to hear your views— ('Tis ever well to warch our P's and Q's)— Upon some matters of a serious kind, On which 'tis well to hear each others mind. I've heard it said—I know not, sirs, how true— That you're not pleased—I mean at least a few— With how I've played my part while leading you. Say, sirs, if this report is so or not, I hope we're naught but one united lot.

PATRICK—[Who was appointed spokesman on the occasion.] It may be, sir, that you're not pleased us all— 'Tis hard to do so with a "rolling ball"— But we're content to follow still your lead; So of these rumors take no further heed. I make a motion still to follow you; What say you, gentls? you're all agreed—*et vous?* [Pointing to John Sandfield and Foley.]

ALL.—Agreed—Agreed!

BROWN— So far, 'tis well, I thank you friends all round; You've proved that union 'mongst us still is found, At least on this point—but, pray hear me yet, Your views on th' Union I should like to get. 'Tis said outside—I hope 'tis falsely said— That on this question we're at loggerhead, It's so?—come, sirs, be frank—

JOHN SANDFIELD— Enough! Let's hear no more this silly gammon, Remember, sirs, you can't serve God and mammon. You long for power, though you fear to say so, With all your blustering, mock-heroic bravo. Just at the time we need our ranks united You make a step and all our hopes are blighted. That it—a convention! what a stupid blunder! It serves you right—'twill rent us all asunder. I'm dead against it, for 'twill breed confusion, My motto's been, and is,— "PRESERVE THE UNION!"

FOLEY—And mine!

CONNOR—And mine!

BROWN—

What! Foley, Connor, you desert your chief? This shameful trick will fill you yet with grief; But go you say, the rest are true as steel, We'll fight—we'll conquer, and we'll—

WALLBRIDGE— A truant, good sir, your going rather fast, You count your chickens long before their hatched; I'm also 'gainst the great convention move, A silly ruse, indeed, I think, 'twill prove.

PATRICK— And hear me, friend, I've just one word to say About the matter's brought us here to-day: There are *five* more, though they're not present now, Who to some joint authority'll not bow; I tell you, sir, (addressing Mr. Brown), you'd better change your course.—

BROWN— Sir, shut your ally's mouth, let's hear no more this cant, We know you long since learnt the art of rant, [General tittering at the leader's wit.]

MOWAT— 'Tis sad indeed to see these splits exist, We leave around a very hazy mist; They differ only on a point or two. Let's heal the breach, as we, like me, should do. We still have confidence in Mr. Brown— I make the motion—do not vote it down.

JOHN SANDFIELD— Bah! I come Foley, Connor, follow me this way, We'll knock them higher than a kite—Hurrah! [Here the happy trio leave the room in the highest state of justification, Foley and Connor singing: "For he's a right good fellow," (referring no doubt to John Sandfield). Brown looks dreadfully dejected; he staggers under the weight of this unexpected blow, and is led to his rooms by Mowat and McDougall. The caucus breaks up in the greatest confusion.]

ACT IV.

Brown Solus.

[Brown, having somewhat recovered from the state of mental abstraction into which he was thrown by the scenes recorded in the last act, is left alone in his bed-room, where he thus bewails his sorrowful fate.]—

Oh! cruel Fate! Oh! dire and dreadful hour! This day I'm ruined. For ever's gone my power, My brightest hopes are blasted dark as night, And place and power vanish from my sight. Oh! Foley, Connor, I had faith in you, But man is mortal—naught below is true. Why talk I thus?—I've done it all myself— That cursed desire for Ministerial self! I've ever wavered for to gain that end, 'Tis now too late my wayward course to mend.

[Here he grasps his head tightly with his hands and pacing the room with rapid strides, proceeds.]— But, oh! the dreadful thought distracts my brain, My life's ambition I shall never gain! Ah! there—see—see—'tis doors livel' anon! Its going—there—see—see—its going—gone!

[At this juncture Mr. Macdougall and Mr. Mowat, who were disturbed in an adjoining room by the frantic exclamations of their leader, rush to his rescue, just as he tumbled to the ground.]

CLOSING SCENE.—Grand Tableau, with red lights in profusion—Brown and Macdougall in a tight embrace—the eccidore in deep and contrite penitence.