

Under Consideration.

A POLITICAL NOVEL OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

BY THE EDITOR OF THE *Mail*.

CHAP. I.

"I can a tale unfold," etc.
—*Shakespeare.*

'Twas a wild and stormy night. The wind roared and howled round the Parliament Buildings, and the drifting snow whirled in fleecy clouds through the deserted streets. 'Twas a night in short

"Fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils."

[The printer will please put this and other quotations in nonpareil, and indented so as to attract attention to my aptness at citation and wide range of reading. I flatter myself that there are mighty few Canadian journalists that can sling in more quotations to the column than the writer. But to resume:]—

The debate was over. The members had gone to their respective houses and hasheries. Silent was the chamber that but an hour previous had re-echoed with the tenorant, brilliant rhetoric of a Lauder, and the fiery, impetuous eloquence of a Morris,—the logical statesman-like utterance of a Meredith on the one hand, and resounded to the ruffianly brawlings of a Fraser, the sniveling, tremulous tones of a Hardy, and the impotent truculence and blasphemy of a Mowat. Long had the discussion been waged, and at every point had the imbecile and disloyal creatures on the Ministerial benches been worsted by their able and patriotic antagonists; though, insolent in the strength of numbers, they had been enabled to snatch a seeming and shortlived triumph by brute force.

Now, in the Executive Council Chamber they were consoling themselves for crushing humiliation inflicted upon them, by a banquet worthy of the palmiest days of Lucullus. Choice viands bestowed the board, and wines of the costliest vintages sparkled in richly-chased goblets.

Good brands of liquors and cigars,
Good stabling and attentive ostlers.
—*advt.*

Needless to say that the plundered taxpayers of Ontario sustained the burden of this reckless extravagance under the head of "unforeseen, and unprovided for." Oliver Mowat paced the apartment wrapped in thought and a heavy overcoat, arresting his steps at frequent intervals to drain a copious draught of the liquor he needed to nerve him to his desperate purpose. The unesthetic and brutal Fraser had thrown off all restraint and was revenging himself upon his absent opponents by unscrupulous jests. Before him lay a copy of the Orange bill unfolded, which, with a degree of incredible malignity he used at intervals as a cuspidor. A pile of registered letters which contained remittances from settlers and lumbermen, lay opened upon the sideboard. Messrs Wood and Pardee having had a dispute as to which should have the opportunity of appropriating their contents, were settling the matter by a game of euchre, accompanied by frequent accusations of foul play and aburgations which made the messengers shudder.

Suddenly the Premier,

"By merit raised to that bad eminence."
—*Milton.*

stopped, and turning to Fraser remarked in a deep hoarse voice.

"Our plan is working favourably, methinks. Its consummation must be hastened.—Not another month must elapse before—"

"I tumble," said Fraser. "Tumble" is a very coarse expression which is only used by vulgar and uneducated people. They would not even have known what it meant in the

Twelfth century. They would not know even now, in Rome or Florence—which goes to show how much superior the cultivated Italian is to the Canadian who spits on the floor and sneers at Oscar Wilde.

"I tumble," he repeated, "we are ready."
"Your trusty Land Leaguers will not fail us?" said the Premier.

"No, they have been seoured by appointment of two additional messengers, and our promise to pass a resolution of sympathy with the Cause of Ireland, and to hoist the Green flag on the Lieut.-Governor's residence on the 17th. We can count on them."

"And the Agnostic contingent?"
"Ah, they are impatient for action—the *Mail's* Saturday articles have roused their indignation to fever heat, and they only wait the signal. Let me but flash the word over the wires, and Sir John Mousseau, and the *Mail* fiend shall fall beneath their daggers. Ber-lud!"

And the blood-thirsty Commissioner of Public Works emitted a Satanic chuckle over the anticipated success of his fell devices. This was improper on his part. We may be charged with a morbid scrupulosity in such matters, the cynical may sneer at our views as impracticable, but nevertheless we must put on record our solemn conviction, that assassination, as a means of accomplishing a political object is decidedly wrong. That is, it is wrong on the part of any mere nineteenth century upstart like Mowat! When a Ruler by Divine Right, born in the Imperial purple, finds it necessary to thin out the Opposition benches it is over so much different. They used to do these things in Rome and Florence quite frequently.

CHAP. II.

Amid immeasurable wastes
We walk this arid earth,
Of people of congenial tastes
There is too great a dearth.
Who culminates his nature's wealth
Will ne'er lugubrate by stealth.
—*Oscar Wilde.*

"Why thus moodful, Augustus?" queried Elvira Tavistock of her lover Augustus J. Swinkerton, as they strolled along the classic slopes of Parkdale, in sweetest soul communion.

Augustus hove a sigh and lapsed into thought. "Creighton and Lauder have been moving for more returns," he remarked sadly. He was a civil service employee and wore an eye-glass and yellow kid gloves.

Elvira stopped short, withdrew her arm from his and looked him in the face.

"No, Augustus J. Swinkerton," she said emphatically, "You do not deceive me by the subtle sophistries which are characteristic of the representatives of a corrupt government seeking to evade popular indignation. You are a Grit, Augustus, and even in your hours of dalliance your long continued habits of mendacity will assert themselves."

A flush suffused the cheek of the youth as he responded, "What have I done Elvira, to deserve this at your hands? To you, at least, I have been true as the Russian to the Pole.—Ah, Elvira if you only know!"

"Then you are concealing something from me, cruel, cruel Augustus!" and the maiden sobbingly threw her convulsed frame upon his bosom as he chewed a clove to conceal his emotion.

"Get up, Elvira. The local reporter of the *Telegram*, anxious to pander to a depraved public appetite for sensations, looms in the near distance. Even now he seizes his trusty pencil, and produces his note book,—Oh this is too much!"

"Then you will tell me?" she said, bracing up suddenly.

"Yes,—anything—everything. Let us take refuge in yonder friendly refreshment room, whither the *Telegram* fiend being impecunious dare not follow us. Alas! foiled! foiled!

Have a stew, or dost like 'em in their native rawth?"

"Oh, you are too good, too kee-ind," she quoth in murmurously,— "But the secret, Augustus—the terrible secret which so weighs on you!"

"Hearken thou, idol of my soul. There is a deep laid plot! There is treason in the air! The leaders of the Government have sworn that ere another month Ontario shall strike for independence. Even now Gen. D. D. Hay is on a bee line for the western boundary, to hoist the standard of revolt, and dare the Manitoba land scoopers to come on."

"Oh, this is indeed, quite too muchly awful," said the maiden, in accents suffused by oyster stew. "But it must not be. We must save the country from civil war. But how—how? Ha! I bethink me of a plan. Yes, this very night will I see Creighton, and have him move for returns, and put a series of questions to the ministry which will reveal to the world their dark designs. He is young and chivalrous—he will do it—he shall—he must!"

And the brave girl, without stopping to finish the oysters, dashed out of the restaurant, hailed a passing street car, and was gone before her lover had time to realize her object.

Presently a thought struck him which caused the cold perspiration to stand in beadlets on his brow.

"Heavings!" he muttered, "if they find out I've given them away I shall be frod, sure pop."

He was so overcome that he sort of drifted out into the street in a mechanical way, forgetting to interview the cashier, and broke into a heedless, absent-minded kind of a run on getting outside.

(To be Continued.)



"THE HIGH PR-EST OF C-RR-PT-N"
SACRIFICING A LARGE AMOUNT OF THE PEOPLE'S MONEY.

During the past seven years Germany has sent 10,000,000 corks to this country to squeeze our women, and thousands of gallons of Rhine wine to make our men tight.—*Philadelphia Chronicle.*

Whenever you read of a city boy 14 years of age going West and killing twenty-six Indians and fourteen grizzly bears in one week don't you believe it. That's too many Indians by at least three.