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Guelph Evening Mercury

OFFICE:.....MACDONELL STREET
FRIDAY EVENING, JANUARY 10, 1868.

The Maiden's Choice
OR, THE LAIRD OF BIRKENCLUECH.

A Tale of the Covenanters.

"Better keep civil and quiet," said the latter, with a warning nod. "I have only to give the word, and in two minutes you will be lying bound on the floor as helpless as a log of wood."

"Yes," said Walter, contemptuously. "You can be bold and boastful with a band of soldiers at your back, but I have a limit, and not even your masters of the Priory will allow you to commit wanton insult and outrage to gratify your own personal spite and passion. But your own personal spite and passion, I warn you, will be brought to account for this day's proceeding."

"Who will bring me to account for it?" said Allan. "Mr. Elliot, the Wing, the Countess, and the Countess's friends, who will listen to his complaint against a loyal officer, zealous in his Majesty's service. I shall, I daily with my purpose, only to enjoy my triumph more completely. I would have you know that you are completely in my power—my power, whom you were wont to despise and ignore. The tide has turned, my fine fellow, and for all your former success, I am able to baffle you yet. You triumphed no doubt in the thought that you had been my successful rival for the hand of Marion Gordon. But good fortune enables me to baffle you, and now I torture you by telling you that she is mine!"

"Monter, are you base enough to force a lady to be your wife against her own will and choice?" exclaimed Walter, in amazed indignation.

"I never hesitate to take advantage of circumstances," rejoined Allan, with cool audacity.

"And may I ask if you have formed any design regarding Marion?"

"Have I not told you?" answered Walter, "that before sunset she shall be my wife?"

"By force and violence?"

"That is as she chooses; but not if she is sensible enough to yield to necessity, and yield; it is not such a painful necessity after all that makes a woman the wife of a man who loves her. And that I Marion Gordon, as much as you can do."

"And knowing as you do that she has rejected you and preferred another, you would yet compel her to a marriage?"

"Even so," replied Walter. "The time is past for fair words and useless persuasions. The hour of revenge, too, on you, Walter Elliot, for all your riches, is at hand. I am among the rest. Should this outlaw, Hugh McKail, be found concealed in this house, you and he go to prison together, and you can take the pleasant duty of watching Marion Gordon have become Mrs. Captain Allan. For your further comfort, I inform you that Brian has just gone down to the Manor to prepare for the ceremony. He waits only till I bring Marion down to unite us according to the law of the Church and the country."

"Oh, Walter, Walter," exclaimed Marion in a tone of sorrowful indignation.

"We have not wronged him, then," said Walter, casting towards her a grave, calm look. "It was no uncharitable fear that prompted the precaution we took."

"Alas! no," she responded. "If the words he has spoken are not uttered in jest, what took place last night has saved me from a frightful doom."

"In jest," echoed Allan, who took hold of the first part of her remark. "You take me to be a jester to you. Then my fair one you shall speedily be deceived. As soon as your doubtful knight-errant there is disposed of, I shall take you under my special care, and as you are prisoner to me, I shall bear you on my palfrey to the manse which you know is no strange place to us, and from thence as man and wife we proceed to my quarters at Sandhurst, where you shall be gay and happy as a soldier's bride. Now, Walter Elliot, who is it that triumphs at last? Ha! I hear the men have returned from the search. I suppose they have found the traitorous person."

He flung open the door, and looked eagerly into the passage. The soldiers had returned, but their search had been fruitless.

"Haven't found him, Captain," answered the leader of the four who had been exploring the mansion.

"No!" the thought you would be sure to have upon the Whip fox in this burrow. Have you turned up every corner?"

"There's nothing the size of a rat hole escaped us, unless it were infernal collar and prison underground. We got a light and went through all we could see but there are so many of them, and they run into each other so confoundingly, that we may have missed one."

"Oh, never mind, the cunning rascal will fall into honest hands soon. Meanwhile we must take into custody the Laird of Birkencluech, who acted in the capture, when he had almost effected his capture. Soldiers, seize him and make him your prisoner."

"Do it at your peril," cried Walter, "for as the soldiers make a movement to capture him, 'That is your story,' he added, turning to Allan. 'I have a different, and it will not increase your credit when I tell it. But, sir, you have no right to take me prisoner. The person you seek has not been found here. I have allowed your men to search every where, and the result has failed. We got a light and went through all we could see but there are so many of them, and they run into each other so confoundingly, that we may have missed one.'"

Charles, summoned to the manse, and whistled carefully while Walter spoke. The troops paused and looked to their captain for the order to be repeated.

"On second thought," he observed, "while the flash of triumph reddened his features, instead of conveying Mr. Elliot from Birkencluech as a prisoner, I will leave you with four of the men to keep guard over him here till I make my report to Sir Thomas Turner and receive his instructions. Away to the courtyard and bring four of the men stationed there."

The trooper who received this order hastened to obey it, and while he was gone a perfect silence was maintained in the apartment. Walter bit his lip to restrain the expression of anger which he felt at this intimation, but the hot blood flushed his brow till it grew crimson, and he ground his teeth at the thought that the spiteful hate, Allan was backed by a physical power which he, the subject of it, was unable to resist. In natural circumstances he could have treated Charles and all his vicious venom with contemptuous equanimity. But here he was in a position to commit the grossest outrage which his evil nature prompted, and Walter had no means of defence. Thus his brave manly soul was moved as it could not have been moved by any unassisted manifestation of unscrupulous passion on the part of Allan.

A loud clinking and tramping in the passage notified the coming of the soldiers for whom the Captain had sent, and presently they appeared within the threshold with Jackson at their head.

TO BE CONTINUED.

OUT OF WORK.—William Brant, a steady, respectable man, aged forty years, formerly an employee of the American Express Company, applied to the Police Justice of Buffalo, on Wednesday last, to be sent to the workhouse as a pauper. He is an accomplished bookkeeper, and speaks English and French fluently, and is temperate in his habits; but he could obtain no employment. He refused to accept money offered him to meet his present wants, saying that it was employment he needed. The magistrate refused to commit him, but undertook to find a situation for him.

France and the Roman Question.

(Paris Correspondence N. Y. Tribune.)

"There is a dilemma. The Pope needs Rome for his independence. Italy aspires to the possession of Rome, which she requires as an imperative requisite of her unity. Well, we declare, in the name of the French Government, Italy shall not take possession of Rome! (Loud applause.) Never!"

"So spoke M. Rouher, yesterday, toward the close of his long discourse on the Roman question. At the close, and lest there should be any misinterpretation, he explained that by 'Rome' he meant all the territory now ruled by the Pope. His other important statement was that the 'Pope had accepted the conference, without reserve or restriction.'"

It will be an aid to the relative faith we may put in the above-cited words of Minister Rouher, to very briefly review the great debate on the Roman question, which began last week in the Senate, and after four days of long speech-making this week in the Corps Legislatif, closed last night. In the Senate no voice was raised in favor of liberty, or against the temporal weakness of the Pope, but an effort was made by the three clerical orators, two cardinals and the Archbishop of Paris, to induce Government to pronounce clearly and positively for the Papal Power. The cardinals themselves, clearly and positively enough—and logically, too—maintained that there were two national courses to follow: renounce all protection of the Pope, give him up as a sacrifice to Italy, ambitious of unity; or, effectively protect that sovereign by restoring to him the territory which ambitions Italy has taken from him since 1809—break up united Italy into fragments, or not confederate Italy, and destroy its power of aggression. Of course, they were favorable to the latter process. Their arguments in support of it, cleared of declamatory surplusage, is that the spiritual power depends, for its faithful exercise, on the temporal power; and that a Pope, beside the King of Italy, at Rome, would be a subject; while, protected by the rule of France, he would be independent. The Archbishop of Paris, a comparative liberal, and more moderate in tone than the Cardinals, known widely to stand well with the Emperor, offered what may be regarded as the best terms of compromise that his order could consent to, in nearly these words:—"It would be desirable, if possible, to restore the provinces of which the Pope has been deprived. It is absolutely necessary to preserve, for him, the territory he actually rules over. None should be sought for to strengthen the Pontifical Government by a wise and vigorous development of its resources." A certain vagueness in these propositions, taken with the known relations and sentiments of the speaker, gave them, at the time of their utterance, a sort of semi-official authority. And yet the moderate, conciliating Archbishop, and even that wary old ex-Volturnian, Senator Chas. Dupin, joined with the more zealous Cardinals in asking Government to define its policy, if it had one, in regretting its least seeming vacillation. On Monday, and in the Corps Legislatif, the debate was opened by Jules Favre, with one of the ablest of all that great orator's masterpieces of eloquence and criticism,—a searching, merciless examination of the long, contradictory, vacillating course of French policy and impolicy, and no policy, observed in this Roman business, from 1849 till to day, and his conclusion, it is to be noted, is nearly identical with that of the Cardinals:—"We must get out of this dilemma at any price, and there are but two outlets,—either abandon the temporal government, which will arrange then with Italy, or maintain the Pontifical power effectively, and, in that case, take away from Italy and restore to the Pope the provinces he possessed before 1809. The time for half measures and expedients is passed. The time is come for decided opinion; for a clear and definite policy. This does not suit the clerical party; but it is as much of a concession as the intelligent ones among them could expect."

On Wednesday, Thiers delivered his great speech. The first article in Thiers' creed of foreign policy is the balance of power in Europe. He does not believe that that is the key and cornerstone of any safe, permanent constitution of Europe. From this point of view he treated at length, last Wednesday, the relations of France and Italy and the temporal power. His condemnation of the errors committed by Napoleon III. when acting for Italy and against the Pope, and when semi-active or passive between the two, was all the more impressive, that it was solidly based, for a large part—say exactly based—on the declarations and statements of real or pretended principles of Government, and And Thiers' conclusion—not markedly different, though arrived at by a quite different process of argument from that of the Cardinals of Jules Favre—was, added to the preceding calmly-severe censure of the illogical, contradictory vacillating policy of the Government, what finally forced Minister Rouher to come to a partial definition of its future policy.

I am afraid that in an attempt to review in half a column of the Tribune a debate whose printed report fills forty columns of the Moniteur, I have poorly succeeded in showing the course and constantly increasing weight of the pressure that is brought to bear on Government, finally squeezing out the declaration of Minister Rouher which heads this letter.

The relative faith we may put in that utterly positive declaration, amounts to this:—For the present, we will maintain the Pope's sovereignty over his actual little domain and his 700,000 inhabitants, against Italy. If Napoleon can get the congress together (which is no very probable), and the get it to share the responsibility with him in such a maintenance (which is less probable) so much the better; and if the Pope himself will come into the arrangement, by renouncing claims on the provinces that Italy has annexed to herself (which is utterly improbable), why, then, yet better. Meanwhile, conservative Catholic France may count—at least till after next general election, and the death of Pius IX.—on a practical French occupation of Rome. With the present steam and telegraph conveniences, the garrison may be withdrawn as far as Toulon.

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Guelph, 2nd August, 1867. (4w-1y)

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THOMAS McCRAE,
Guelph, January 11, 1867.

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Insolvent Act of 1864.
In the matter of Thomas M. Grier, AN INSOLVENT.

COUNTY OF WELLINGTON, B. Grier, of the County of Ontario, do hereby certify that he is assigned to the custody of the above Act, under the provisions of the above Act, I shall offer for sale at the Town Hall, in the City of Toronto, in the County of York, on

Wednesday, 26th Feb., 1868
at two o'clock in the afternoon of that day, all the right, title and interest of the said insolvent, in that certain parcel or tract of land and premises situate, lying and being in the Village of Markham, Township of Peel, County of Wellington, Province of Ontario, composed of V.L. Lot number Eight, on the East side of Queen Street, in the said Township of Peel, and bounded as described in a deed from John M. Schenker, and with the said insolvent, made the 23rd February, 1867, with Deedling House, Barn, Stable and outbuildings thereon, and a good garden, with two acres of land.

TERMS — — — CASH.
Further particulars may be had on the premises, or at the office of Messrs. McEwen & O'Connor, Barristers, Guelph, or at the office of the undersigned, with whom all hypothecary creditors are required to file their claims within six days of the day of sale.

THOMAS SAUNDERS,
Official Assignee.

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DUNCAN ROBERTSON, Everton, W.T.
Guelph, No. 14th, 1867. wtr

South Wellington AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

THE Annual Meeting of the above Society will be held at ELLIS' HOTEL,
On SATURDAY, 25th January,
at 2 o'clock p.m., for the election of Officers and transaction of other business.

GEORGE MURTON, Secretary.
Guelph, 5th January, 1868. 6-1d

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NATHAN TOVELL,
Guelph, 27th Aug. 1867. Nelson Crescent

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