

quest, for had it not been so the felon would never have hit upon that one position as his greatest chance of successfully effecting an escape. If that felon had lived in Halifax he would most surely have played another game. He might even have said "I have given up my person to these men for two days on the promise that by my so doing they will ever protect me from being made a city father"—and truth to say the position of our Aldermen is not an enviable one. It is suggestive of far more kicks than halfpence. Aldermen may work never so hard, may show by their diligent attendance to business that civic dignity is in Halifax totally unallied to turtle soup and habitual gastronomic excess, but it is all of no avail. Somebody must be laughed at, and who so good a butt as an Alderman? Little dribbles of the chaff which is so liberally poured upon the civic dignitaries of London, are trickled on their heads, without any consideration for the different circumstances in which London and Halifax Aldermen are placed. The Halifax City Council controls the construction of a new City. London Aldermen obstruct the improvement of an old one. The name however remains and some shallow brains imagine that a man once styled Alderman becomes a fair subject for abuse, both of a public and private nature. Give a dog a bad name and hang him; call a man an Alderman and any *flâneur* may write him down a guzzling old fool. How little, with all their failings, dronings, and love of useless discussion our Aldermen deserve to be thus written down, is shown by the public works which since the incorporation of the city have been performed. Much of course remains to be done. An Alderman cannot be expected to assume the wings of an angel on his election to office. It is better perhaps for us that such is not the case, for were it so many would take the wings of the morning, and at the expiration of a month's trial fly away. There is one thing however to which a Haligonian gentleman exposes himself on his election to the post of Alderman. We grieve to say that by so sacrificing himself at the shrine of the city deities he exposes himself to the vilest and most offensive kind of personal abuse and chaff. If a London Alderman dies of apoplexy at his own home, common decency prevents any allusion in the paper which records his demise to the big dinners which was its most probable cause. Even in our own province, if a delegate, or other august visitor, carried away by the grandeur of the moment, loses his seat and falls insensible beneath the table, a natural reserve on the part of those present, prevents the fact being made public. Not so however with a member of our City Council. His nose, his vest, his profession and his intonation are alike commented upon in the columns of a Halifax newspaper. Ugly names, selected in most cases from the line of business, or personal appearance of the men to whom they refer—Personal reflections, actionable sometimes, but for the thin veil of the nicknames which enshroud their objects, are once a week pitched upon our aldermen and obtruded for the perusal of the public. What must a stranger think when his eye unfortunately falls upon *Things talked of in Halifax*. He would naturally enquire "Is it possible that people really employ their time talking about such bosh?" His astonishment would not be decreased by the observation that every other week such twaddling talk seems to obtain in Dartmouth. "Here" he would say "is a whole city and suburb, spending their leisure hours in comments upon the dress and private lives of their civic functionaries. So at least I infer from the paper before me. A "Vest"—what a little thing to form a basis for conversation; but ah! here is something about the piety of an Alderman—this is simply bad taste." We know that the stranger's judgment is premature. We know that few fortunately take sufficient interest in the minor details of Aldermen's costume to wade through a column of bad Eng-

lish to arrive at them. The question then arises, who talks about Screech's vest? Who wastes his time in the investigation of the private Aldermanic life? Who presumes to make the piety or impiety of a fellow-citizen the subject of public criticism? We cannot tell: but for the credit of our citizens we will hope that the writers are the only persons interested or amused by their productions. They may perhaps elicit uproarious applause in the taverns of Barrack and Water Streets, and at the corners of other streets. All respectable people however complain of the unfairness of the attacks made and would willingly see this foul blot removed from a leading journal which tri-weekly appears upon their tables. We have written the above in no spirit of peevish criticism. We hold that it is as much our duty to allude to any published thing which offends the public taste, as it is to draw attention to a false argument or a false statement. Let the managers of the journal in question take a friendly hint, and change the tone of their last column on Saturday evenings, or perhaps better still banish "*Things talked of*" for ever from their paper.

OUR CITY PRESS AND STRANGERS.

To suppose that Nova Scotians, as represented by the tone of our fourth estate, are indifferent to the opinions formed of them by strangers, would be a supposition false indeed. We are as sensitive, or more so, to praise or blame as are the inhabitants of Boston or Philadelphia.

Nor are we altogether unwise in this respect. We are a young people and acknowledge no Provincial standard of excellence, whether in language, in writing, or in social tone. Our newspapers republish all that is elsewhere printed in our favor, but they rarely republish, save for political purposes, anything written against us. The columns of twaddle, republished from Canadian papers, for weeks following our first reception of the Canadian penny-a-liners, are still fresh in our memory. Everything that appeared in the Canadian press relative to our "peerless harbour,"—our city "bloods," and their "high stepping horses,"—the "transcendent loveliness" of our ladies,—all such paragraphs were recopied again, and again, under the heading—"What others think of us." But when some luckless scribbler expressed an opinion that Halifax was not particularly remarkable for feminine loveliness, our city press scouted such an idea as altogether preposterous. In this particular instance, however, our press may have erred on the side of gallantry, and the error (if it were an error) was excusable. But when on little absurdities are commented upon—even in the lightest strain—by one other than a Nova Scotian, the wrath of our city press knows no bounds. The *Chronicle* may, week after week, denounce the leaders of the Conservative party as men capable of the foulest crimes against honor and truth;—the *Colonist* may retort upon the leaders of the Liberal party in a precisely similar manner, but—no matter, Nova Scotians are abusing one another, and therefore such a style of warfare is at once dignified and gentlemanlike. It fairly represents the tone of Nova Scotian politicians, and it is our bounden duty to admit that such a tone is highly creditable to us—the British American people,—the confines of whose future territory are to be limited only by the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. But, let a stranger—an Englishman, for example, dare to hint that our leading men might possibly consult with advantage the tone of statesmen upon whose words hang the probable destiny of millions,—and such an Englishman becomes the mark for vituperation such as would put the *New York Herald* to the blush. His opinions may be